THE LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA

Presented By The
William A. Whitaker
Foundation

W823
N912
v. 3

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025 with funding from
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

https://archive.org/details/nothingneworloui03unse

Nothing New!!!

OR,

LOUISA,

THE

ORPHAN OF LENNOX ABBEY;

A

NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

London:

PRINTED BY J. BARFIELD,

Wardour-street, Soho;

FOR J. BOOTH, CORNER OF DUKE AND OF DUTCHESS STREET,

PORTLAND-PLACE.

1803.

LETTER I.

Lady Caroline Egerton to Miss Lenox.

THE die is cast, my dear Louisa, and your poor friend is to be the victim of ambition. I have passed my word to receive the addresses of Lord Barford, to accept his offered hand, and become a wretched woman. There was no alternative, my mother persists in her determination of concealing my sister, till I am married; and as both she and my father, highly approve of Lord Barford, I am obliged to comply, or

919459
W 823
1756
N 3

prolong my poor sister's sufferings and captivity; and that for an undetermined period. Since I am convinced that I should feel the same repugnance to every other man, that I do to Lord Barford; I may therefore as well accept him, as defer the sacrifice any longer. If my sister, or Lord Ormond, knew at how dear a rate I am about to purchase their happiness—surely they would love me—they could not be indifferent to the author of such bliss as they will taste. But hold, they are both too generous not to lament the sad Caroline's fate. It would imbitter the cup of felicity, and cast a gloom upon their gayest moments. No—the secret shall die in my bosom, they shall suppose me happy—perhaps the effort to conceal, may enable me to conquer my unhappy passion. But my dear Louisa, I have a request to make

you

you—do not refuse me, I entreat you—let me have the consoling support of your presence through all the trials that await me. We are to set out for London next Monday—will you accompany me—your philosophy will give me lessons of fortitude, your patience teach me to be resigned; I always learn the practice of some virtue in your society—deny it not to me in the most trying moments of my life. I will send the carriage for you on Saturday, if you will consent to oblige me. My mother is very anxious that you should come. She is in high spirits about this alliance, and as she knows nothing of my partiality for a certain person, she ridicules my distress, and calls it childish affectation. Miss Egerton has left us, and Emma Evelyn too; the latter was so exasperated at the removal of my sister during her absence, that she

remonstrated very warmly on the subject with my mother, whose high spirit could not brook that freedom, and the consequence was, an immediate separation. Just at this time, when my spirits are so low, this is an unlucky circumstance; for I must always lament the loss of Emma's society. She is an amiable girl. She is shortly to be married, I understand, to a Mr. Travers, a clergyman who was tutor to Lord Ormond, and to whom she has been attached for years. May they enjoy a perfect felicity—there is a pleasure in wishing others happy, if one is otherwise oneself.

Your's,

C. E.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Louisa to Lady Caroline.

I CANNOT refuse you, my dear Lady Caroline, though I must confess that I comply with reluctance. I had determined on a six months seclusion at least, it is a respect I think due to the memory of my lamented friend, and which I certainly should have shewn, had no reverse of fortune aggravated her loss. However, it has always been my opinion, that formal duties should yield to urgent calls; and as you fancy I can console you by my presence, I will certainly attend you. But I fear I shall only be found an incumbrance; that

which I have within my inky cloak, and those customary suits of solemn black, are but ill calculated to inspire strength of mind, or cheerfulness. However, I will do my utmost to console you, and perhaps, by repeating my sorrows to your pitying ear, I may succeed in making you forget your own. I enclose two letters for your perusal, which I own have affected me deeply. Since I wrote to you last, I have received a most flattering proof of Sir Henry Paget's affection and sincerity. He came in person, to offer me his hand and fortune, and this when he was acquainted with my altered condition. It pained me excessively to be under the cruel necessity of refusing such generous offers; but alas! I have no heart to bestow, and what were this worthless hand without? About a fortnight after he had been at the priory, I received the

enclosed

enclosed letter. I was extremely surprised to find by it, that the disappointment he received from me, had been the primary cause of his quitting his native country, and encountering the dangers of war. I wept over the pathetic adieu, and mentally offered up prayers for his safety, that he might return free of his ill-placed partiality. By the same post came the letter that accompanies his. You will imagine what I felt in perusing it. After what I have experienced from its writer, I little expected he would have dared to address me again. I own I am astonished beyond expression at his going abroad, instead of immediately celebrating his nuptials, as was expected, with his rich cousin. There is some strange mystery—some dark circumstance, that puzzles and confounds my imagination throughout this whole transaction. If I

have been deceived into thinking basely of Augustus — but no, that is impossible— the facts are too plain—has he not long slighted me—passing months with out writing a line—and then, did he not send his base agent to insult me. No, no, it is too true, that he is unworthy my regard, and it was only the lurking remains of my former partiality, that suggested the possibility of my having been imposed upon—and yet I wish I had read the letter which that vile Simson brought me, as the contents, whatever they were, must have stampt conviction on my mind; but I was too much exasperated at the insulting insinuations of the wretch he had employed, to act otherwise than I did. You will see he alludes to that letter, and supposes I had read it, so that Simson must have concealed the contempt I treated it with, to answer some sly

end,

end, no doubt, for he is a designing wicked man. Augustus accuses me of ingratitude to his mother, and says, I treated her with contempt. How can he say so, he certainly must be ignorant of her behaviour to me—but no matter, it is all over now, and it is folly in me to torment myself with such a miserable retrospect. I wish Augustus had spared me the pain of this last letter—it has affected me deeply and overset for sometime at least, all my resolution to forget him. Adieu, I shall be ready when you send for me.

Your's

L. W.

LETTER III.

Sir Henry Paget to Miss Lenox.

Enclosed in the preceding.

MADAM,

I TRUST to that sweetness of disposition for which I admire you, to pardon this intrusion. I found it impossible to quit England, perhaps for ever, without bidding adieu, to what I hold dearest in it. Yes, Madam, in spite of your refusal, my heart can own no other mistress, and the deep wound it has sustained from your cruelty, can receive its cure from the hand of death alone. That I should seek the only remedy which

which awaits me, in the field of battle ; and endeavour to render the last moments of my life glorious, if they cannot be happy, can be wondered at only by those, who never felt what I do. But I trespass on your time, Madam, and I intended only to bid you farewell. Receive then, my tender adieu, most lovely of thy sex, and since you cannot love, at least think kindly of me. May every choice blessing of heaven be showered upon you, and may the happiness I can never taste, be your's without alloy ! In the moment of danger—in the hour of death itself, your image will swim before my eyes, and your felicity shall be the last prayer of,

Madam,

Your faithful admirer,

H. P.

LETTER IV.

Augustus Dudly to Miss Lenox.

Enclosed with the preceding.

MADAM,

DESERTED as I am by you, and treated with a contempt which I am wholly at a loss to account for, perhaps it is the height of temerity to intrude myself again into your presence. Indeed, Madam, did not a kind of conscious presentiment induce me to believe it is for the last time, I think I should not be so presumptuous. My last letter too unanswered—and such a letter—surely Madam, I have not merited this severity:

verity: the death of Mrs. Lenox has produced a great change. My mother was once honoured with your friendship; with what affection was you not wont to treat her. Yet, she told me with tears, her sister had been dead only a few days, before you altered your behaviour—that you slighted, nay, even refused her advice, and quitted the house you lived in, most abruptly and unfeelingly. Oh, Louisa! to what must I attribute this strange alteration? I will not speak of your conduct towards me; I will say nothing of the affliction with which you have overwhelmed the most faithful, the most affectionate of hearts. But tell me, for heaven's sake tell me, why you have treated my mother thus? but alas! what right have I to ask this question. You despise and cast me off—avoid my presence, and refuse to answer my letters. I can only

wish

wish, that your newly adopted friends may prove as sincere as those you have forsaken; for believe me, Louisa, notwithstanding all I have suffered for your sake, your felicity is dearer to me than any thing upon earth. I am going abroad, I flatter myself I shall never return—I now, therefore, bid you an eternal farewell—good heavens! how forcibly does the idea that we shall meet no more, recall to my recollection those hours of tenderness, those days of bliss we have passed together—when I thought Louisa Lenox faithful as she was fair—when every look was love, and my fond heart doated with extacy upon her. But why do I look back upon what is past never to return. That fairy dream of happiness is over; and who that had lived in paradise, as I have, would wish to prolong their sojourn in the dreary desart of hopeless misery?

misery? Life is become a burthen to me, but I will, when dying, bless the hand that frees me from the insupportable load. But I forget myself, in dwelling thus long upon a subject, which though interesting to me, may perhaps be insupportably tedious to you, Madam. Forgive this intrusion, in consideration of the distracting passion that occasioned it. Farewell, Louisa, most lovely, most cruel Louisa. May you be happy, when the sad heart that now addresses you has ceased to beat—has ceased to feel the sharp arrows of disappointed love. And may the happy favoured lover, for whose sake you have forsaken me, prove worthy of so envied a preference, and may he feel the same ardour, the same sincerity of attachment for you, that has for ever ruined the peace of,

AUGUSTUS DUDLY,

LETTER

LETTER V.

Lord Ormond to Mr. Travers.

JOY to my excellent friend, and may a long continuance of felicity reward you in this world, for the happiness you so largely bestow on others: while the constant exercise of benevolence cannot fail to prepare you for that perfect state, where alone your virtue will meet its full recompence. Ever since the receipt of your hastily written, but kind letter, announcing the joyful tidings of your marriage, I have felt almost as if I was happy myself. Hail! heavenly sympathy, sweet benignant power, that canst irradicate the dark vale of sor-

row,

row, with the sunbeams of another's joy; the glowing heart, beneath thy friendly influence forgets each selfish care—each gloomy discontent: our very being is forgotten, and we exist but in the persons of our friends. I desire you will present me, in the kindest and most respectful manner to Mrs. Travers, tell her I am too warmly interested in her happiness, not to breath constant prayers for its continuance—I esteemed and admired her as Miss Evelyn, but as Mrs. Travers, as the blest source of felicity to my best friend, I behold her in a nearer and a dearer light—and nothing can equal my friendship for her, but the respect that accompanies it. How truly good you are, how strikingly characterestic of yourself is your last letter—written as it was in the perturbation of newly acquired happiness—at a moment when almost all the world is

selfish

selfish—you are still benevolent—and generously snatch a thought from the sweet object, that might well excuse a total neglect of every other, to bestow it upon your unhappy friend. You say your anxiety for Lady Emily increases every hour, while the place of her confinement remains a secret. What then is mine! it is agony—a suspence that borders on distraction. You tell me Mrs. Travers is greatly distressed, on her friend's account—sweet excellence, I know she must be. What a diabolical stroke of policy it was of the Duchess's, to remove her unfortunate daughter during the absence of Miss Evelyn—but it corresponds with the rest of her conduct—the noble spirit which the amiable Emma displayed in refusing to remain any longer under the same roof with a woman so void of principle and feeling, does honour to her heart—and I

am sure you have reason to bless the affectionate impulse that induced her to wave all unnecessary delays, and made her accept your hand without hesitation, that she might be enabled to offer a safe, and honourable asylum to her oppressed friend, as soon as her prison could be ascertained. But alas! hitherto all our efforts have been ineffectual. Lady Emily's place of confinement is still a secret. I received a letter yesterday from Orme, in which he laments his ill success with bitterness of heart. He says, never was any thing conducted more artfully, than Lady Emily's removal from Northington Castle. No soul was entrusted with the secret, except the housekeeper, and La Fite, her confidential valet, who accompanied the sweet creature. A hack chaise and four, was seen by two of the grooms who were airing

their

their horses, to drive up to the great hall door at six o'clock in the morning, the day of Lady Emily's departure. La Fite was with it, so no questions could be asked the drivers, and it is conjectured he had fetched it from a considerable distance, as Mr. Orme enquired at every post town within ten miles of Northington Castle, but both the owners, and drivers, denied any knowledge of the transaction. The grooms curiosity was awakened by seeing a chaise at the door so early, and they loitered within sight of it, till they saw the housekeeper, accompanied by some young lady, with a long veil of thick muslin over her face, get into the chaise. The housekeeper seemed to force the young lady along, who wept very much, and once caught hold of one of the pillars of the colonnade, as if refusing to go; but La Fite presently disengaged her hold, curse

his

his great paw, and the housekeeper and he between them, made her get into the chaise, the blinds of which were immediately pulled up, and they set off full gallop, La Fite followed on horseback. Four days afterwards, the housekeeper and La Fite returned, by the London stage, which passes the park gates. The groom was bold enough to ask the housekeeper next day, what pretty young lady she had been running away with, against her will, the other morning. She desired him to mind his own business, and keep his tongue silent, if he meant to keep his place—she had no business to satisfy his curiosity as she knew of; but, however, she would tell him, it was her niece, who had run away from her friends, and had come to her, and had been at Northington Castle some time in secret, unknown to the Duchess, that fearing her being

being there would be found out, she had determined to take her home, and had asked for leave of absence accordingly; that the girl was unwilling to go home, for fear of her father's anger, which was the reason of her crying so; and she had drawn up the blinds to prevent any body's seeing her. Well Mrs. Morgan, replied the groom, you have made up a mortal good story, and I do not know but what you might have hummed me completely, only for one thing; you forgot to tell me what Mounseer went for, and how he got leave of absence, and how you came to draw your purse strings to afford a post chaise and four—you could not have done more, if you had been carrying away the Duke's daughter. Here the old housekeeper got into a great passion, and calling the groom an impertinent fellow, assured him he should be turn-

ed

ed away next morning, which threat was put in force at the time appointed; and an hour or two afterwards, Mr. Orme received the following note from the Duchess.

Sir,

I am desired by the Duke of Northington, to request you to quit this house immediately. Your salary shall be continued at the usual rate; but the Duke does not think it consistent with his dignity, to keep a person in his house, who tampers with his servants, and teaches them to forget their duty. I should have imagined a man in your dependent situation, would have had too great a regard to his own interest, not to hold family secrets sacred. I am sorry you have done otherwise, and am pained to be under the necessity

of

of giving you such unpleasing information as this conveys.

I am, Sir, your's,

C. NORTHINGTON.

To which Mr. Orme returned the following answer.

MADAM,

I will immediately depart—I would not stay another day under your roof, for millions. My salary shall not be continued—I will accept of nothing at your hands. I despise the meanness of your accusation—I have never tampered with your servants, nor betrayed your secrets. While you suffered Lady Emily to remain under her father's protection, I was faithful to the trust;

trust; but remember, Madam, I am no longer bound to conceal your iniquity—justice forbids me to be silent. You have torn the sweet innocent from her only protector—you have concealed her where none but your own vile agents can find her. But tremble, Madam, the hour of retribution approaches—the hour when the injured Emily shall assert her rights, and the cheeks of her relentless oppressor shall be covered with the blushes of conscious guilt. I am no longer in those humiliating circumstances you so justly condemn. I have exchanged dependence for glorious poverty, and I may, without any imputation of ingratitude, subscribe myself,

Your grace's severe censurer,

RICHARD ORME.

As soon as Mr. Orme could get his things collected together, and packed up, he quitted Northington Castle. He determined to stay in the neighbourhood for some days, to make what enquiries he could, relative to Lady Emily's departure. At the inn where he put up, he met with the discarded groom, who informed him of the circumstances I just now related, and the reason of his discharge from Northington Castle, which elucidated what before appeared an impenetrable mystery; *i. e.* the Dutchess's accusation against Mr. Orme, of tampering with the servants. The fellow's saying, which was the effect of chance, that Mrs. Morgan could not have done more, if she had been carrying off the Duke's daughter, touched their guilty consciences, and they concluded he had been desired by Mr. Orme to make the enquiry, and was informed by him of

the circumstances of Lady Emily's confinement, and removal. Mr. Orme found this man very intelligent, and made use of him in his enquiries all round the neighbourhood—but alas! as I said before, those, as well as every other since made in every direction, have proved abortive; and Mr. Orme begins now to fear, that Lady Emily is really in some private madhouse. Good heavens! the bare supposition is distraction—I cannot support it! Orme informs me, that Lord Hartly is hourly expected, and that he is waiting in town to see his Lordship, who, he does not doubt, will immediately take legal measures to restore his sister to society. The Duke has written to Orme twice, since he left Northington Castle, disclaiming all knowledge of the Duchess's violent proceedings, and entreating him to return; but this Orme has po-

litely, yet positively refused to do, and to accept any pecuniary obligation whatever from his grace's hands. The Duke seems greatly hurt at his refusal, but I think he acts, as every honest man ought to do in his dealings with the great; he asserts that independence, by which alone the dignity of human nature can be supported; he has been injured by one part of the family, it would be mean to accept of any thing from the other, until a proper acknowledgment of their fault has been made, by the offending party. It is the meanness and servility of dependants, that makes the great so insolent and arbitrary; if they were often to meet with such honest indignant spirits, as Orme's, who boldly makes poverty the basis of his liberty, and refuses to barter his integrity for gold—and will not flatter, where he cannot esteem—with such men as

he

he is, they would soon learn to know themselves better—would soon be convinced, that to gain the esteem of the good, they must possess something more valuable than riches—something more honourable than power, and that the path of virtue only, can lead to true greatness. I have lately had a sad addition to my distress, as unexpected as painful; Henry Paget is gone abroad with the secret expedition. I had not an idea of his intention, till a few days before he put it in execution. I only received his letter, time enough to take my leave of him at Canterbury, in his way to Margate. It was in vain to remonstrate with him then, but I could not help reproaching him for not informing me sooner of his intentions. I guess what you would be after, said he, smiling, you would have persuaded me not to go, if you had

been timely informed of my design. Or have gone with you myself, said I, for I can ill spare you at this time. I do not know any good we could do each other, replied he, by croaking together like two frogs in a fen. I intend to get cured of my folly, before I return, and if you are then in want of assistance, I will lend you the receipt. He endeavoured to be as lively as usual, but it would not do—I could see the effort was painful. What a pity it is Miss Lenox cannot prevail upon herself to smile upon our dear Harry's suit. The treatment she has experienced from the Dudly family, must surely have extinguished all affection for her late lover Augustus Dudly. Would to heaven Paget could succeed him—I would for once bless the inconstancy of women; but I fear it is incompatible with the delicacy of Miss Lenox's mind,

to

to transfer her affections so easily; I am sure it is the height of generosity in me, to applaud what I suffer so severely by. Miss Lenox is a lovely woman, and just the wife I should wish for Paget, who I am sure is more worthy to possess such an inestimable treasure, than the insensible being who could relinquish such a jewel, to please the capricious whims of an avaricious mother, whose influence, I am informed, prevented that union from taking place. When I parted with Harry, he did all he could to convince me he was in good spirits, but I fear they bore too great a resemblance to those in which I now subscribe myself,

Dear Travers,

Faithfully your's,

ORMOND.

LETTER VI.

Miss Lenox to Mrs. Mordant.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I ANSWERED* your kind enquiries how I supported my journey, in so hasty a manner, that I had time only for literal replies to your obliging questions. The anxiety you express for me, is too flattering to my heart, to suffer me to be ungrateful or inattentive to your wishes for a single moment, and this consideration must be my excuse for the egotism with which I am obliged

* Neither of these letters appear.

obliged to fill my letters. I told you in my last, that I thought the journey and change of scene would be of service, both to my health and spirits; and I have now the pleasure of assuring you, that my prediction is fulfilled. I am quite another creature; the continual efforts I am forced to make, to keep up poor Lady Caroline's spirits, are of infinite use to my own, and I hope, that by constantly endeavouring to appear cheerful, I shall at last become really so. We live in a constant bustle here, between lawyers, milliners, mantua-makers, jewellers, &c. all the morning, and there are dinner parties among the family connections every day. Lord Barford's family are much pleased with the alliance; and the old Duke of Suffolk, his father, is continually making the most superb presents to his intended daughter-in-law. When

Lady Caroline dines out, which happens at least three times a week, I get a little leisure for scribbling, for I have laid down a positive rule that admits of no alteration, never to visit with her ladyship. Such dissipation accords neither with my deep mourning, nor my present expectations in life. When her ladyship is at home, I am constantly with her, whether alone or in company; and though it is with reluctance she leaves me at home, as she finds I am determined, she complies with my wishes, without teazing me to relinquish them. In her morning excursions I generally accompany her, as she will have my opinion of every thing she purchases. She has a sweet disposition, and deserves to be happy, and I am sure she will be so, if an amiable temper, and a firm determination to do her duty, can make her so. Lord Barford is in extacies—he certainly

certainly doats upon Lady Caroline now; but I am afraid he is volatile. He is whimsical about his carriage, his horses, his cloaths, and as changeable as the wind; he is never twice of the same opinion, about the fashionable trifles of the day. I hope his affection for Lady Caroline will triumph over this natural defect. Old Lady Mary Pemberton, an aunt of Lord Barford's, and who is very fond of him, dined here yesterday. The old lady was very chatty with me, and in the course of conversation, when I was complimenting her on her nephew's approaching happiness, she nodded her head significantly, and said, yes, yes, I hope Harry is fixed at last; but he has given us all a great deal of trouble. He has been twice before as deeply in love as he is now, but not with so amiable an object. One was a childish affair, with a clergyman's

daughter, before he left college, and it was easily broken off; but the last was very near ending seriously. He attached himself to a married lady, a very gay woman, and we all feared a divorce would be the consequence, and then he must have been ruined for ever, as it seems a sort of law among the men of fashion, to marry those women who are divorced on their account. However, luckily for us all, he saw Lady Caroline at an assembly, and was so struck with her, that he slighted his former flame, who revenged his inconstancy in the same way, and soon got another favourite, who has led her through Doctor's Commons, to the altar of impurity; for I am sure neither the laws of God, or man, have any thing to do with such marriages. Now do not you think poor Henry had an escape, added she smiling. Yes indeed, Madam, said I,

Lord

Lord Barford has been very fortunate, and I could not help adding, mentally, I wish Lady Caroline had been equally so in escaping his Lordship. You may be sure I said nothing of this to Lady Caroline, and I politely hinted the same caution to Lady Mary. She said I was a charming girl—so prudent—so thoughtful—she should never forget me. She wished every young woman of fashion had such a prudent friend—there would not be so many *faux pas* among the great; and a vast many more compliments, which I have forgotten, but the sum total is, that I am highly in the old lady's graces. The Duchess of Northington is quite in high spirits, but the Duke appears thoughtful, and often rather low. I know he is afraid Lady Caroline is not following her inclination, and trembles lest she should not be happy. What a

pity

pity it is, that his grace should have given up the reins so entirely to the Duchess. He is a mere cypher; it is very seldom the Duchess pays him the compliment of consulting him; and he is so accustomed to yielding, that he does not appear sensible of the slight. Lady Caroline dined at the Duke of Suffolk's to-day, and that has enabled me to write so much; to-morrow there is to be a party at home, and I must make one *par force*, for I do not like such large companies. Adieu for the present.

FRIDAY NIGHT.

Oh dear! I am in such an agitation—but I must write—Oh! my dear Mrs. Mordant, we have made the most extraordinary discovery, at least we think so; but you will

will understand nothing of this incoherent stuff—I will try if I can compose myself sufficiently to relate the circumstances that led to this surprising adventure. I told you yesterday, that a large company was to dine here to day; it consisted of the Duke and Duchess of Suffolk, Lady Mary Pemberton, Lord Barford, Lord John Pemberton, his youngest brother, and two or three more branches of the family, male, and female, that I know only by names, and indeed they are so truly what the poet calls, the moving furniture of drawing-rooms, that it would be difficult to make any farther distinction than that which is expressed by the servants, who announce their arrival, and call their carriages at their departure. All these I expected; but when I went into the drawing-room before dinner, the Duke said, with a good-natured smile, you will see an old

old friend, Louisa, to-day: your admirer, and namesake, Count de Weltzden, dines here. I told his grace I should be much gratified in the pleasure he promised me, though it would recall past scenes too forcibly, to be quite unmixed with pain. My lamented friend Mrs. Lenox, was always delighted with the notice the Count honoured me with, but I must now look in vain for her approving smile. I sympathise in your loss, my dear, replied the Duke, but you can never want an approving smile, while you move in this circle, bowing round. While he was speaking, the good old Count was announced. When the Duke presented me, his grace said, receive your old favourite by a new name, this is Miss Weltzden. The Baron started—but recollecting himself, he took my hand, and bowing upon it, said, politely, so amiable a

young

young lady must be welcome by any name. Dinner was soon afterwards announced, and the conversation was quite general, but I could perceive the Count was very thoughtful, and I caught him once or twice observing me with a very scrutinizing eye. When we adjourned to the drawing-room, after dinner, the Count was the first gentleman that joined us. I was sitting alone on a sopha when he entered, the other ladies were busy in giving their opinion of a diamond feather, the Duke of Suffolk had presented Lady Caroline with a few days before. The Count took his seat by me, and began in his native language, to ask a number of questions concerning the interval that had elapsed since he saw me; he lamented the death of my beloved Mrs. Lenox, in a manner that did honour to his feelings, and encreased the esteem I always felt

felt for him. At last, he said, will you deem me impertinent, my lovely young friend, if I enquire by what strange event you have changed your name, and by what right you claim that of Weltzden. I never heard it out of my own family before—pardon the anxious curiosity of an old man, who has more at stake than you can imagine, and who scarcely dares trust himself with the illusion of his own imagination. I replied, not without some degree of agitation, I never had a right to the name of Lenox, Sir, it was Mrs. Lenox's wish that I should bear it, but Weltzden was my father's name, who was a native of Germany. Of Germany, exclaimed the Count, and started from his seat, was his name Augustus Frederick Weltzden? It was, said I, and trembled I knew not why. Great God! where is he; does he live, cried the

Baron.

Baron. Ah no! he has long been dead, he was killed at the battle of —— in America, when I was only six months old; but why this agitation, my good Sir, he could not be related to you; my father was only a common soldier in Captain Wassenar's troop of Hessian dragoons. As I said this, the Baron rose from his seat, and clasping me in his arms, cried, in an almost frantic voice, my child! my child! my own Louisa! Frederick Augustus Weltzden was my son. The Count's exclamation had attracted the notice of the rest of the company, and they now crowded around us. The violence of my feelings was too much for me, and I fainted. When I came to myself, I found I had been conveyed to the Duchess's dressing room, and only her grace, and one of her attendants, were with me. As soon as I appeared quite recover-

ed,

ed, she dismissed the latter, and the Duchess asked me if I could explain the wonderful scene they had just witnessed; for as to the Count, added she, he is perfectly out of his wits, there is no getting a rational sentence from him. I am nearly as much at a loss as your grace, replied I; the Count says my father was his son, but how he is so fully convinced of it, I cannot tell, as their situations in life were so extremely different. Do you feel yourself well enough, said the Duchess, to see the Count; he is waiting with great impatience, may I fetch him hither. Your grace is very condescending, said I; my spirits are greatly flurried, but I think I feel myself equal to the interview; it will relieve me from a suspense that becomes more insupportable every moment; but would it not be more proper that I should go to the Count, Madam.

dam. No, no, replied her grace, I will fetch him, and away she went. They soon returned, and after enquiring tenderly how I did, the Count seated himself by my side; forgive me, my dear young friend, said he, the flurry I have occasioned you; I hope soon to have a right to compensate by the tenderness of a fond parent, for all you have suffered on my account. I have no doubt remaining of your being my grand daughter; but that I may not seem to yield to a romantic imagination, let us investigate every circumstance of conviction, that the world may be as well satisfied as ourselves, of our relationship. Are you named after your mother. I am, Sir, and my dear Mrs. Mordant has a certificate of my birth in her possession, written by my mother's own hand, and a handkerchief marked in hair, with my father's names at full length,

which

which was found in his bosom by the soldier who picked me up in the field of battle. I have also a ring, which he took from my father's finger at the same time, and of so particular a form, that I doubt not you will know it, Sir, if you have ever seen it before. Have you got it here my love? said the Count. Yes, Sir, it is in a little casket up stairs. I have always travelled with it carefully packed up, ever since Mrs. Lenox gave it me. I will fetch it directly. The Count took hold of my hand—to convince you that my knowledge of the ring is well founded, I will describe one, before I see it, that my son always wore, and which had belonged to his mother; it was a large cornelian, of a ruby colour, set in gold, in the form of a heart; the impression was, a phœnix, with these words, "there can be but one," which was her father's crest,

and

and the motto belonging to his coat of arms; it was given to one of her ancestors by his Sovereign, for his unequalled bravery in a hard fought field, where his King, in danger of being made a prisoner, was rescued by his single valour, from his perilous situation. I could not help lifting up my eyes in silent astonishment, as the Count described the ring, as it removed every doubt respecting my birth. You will see, Sir, said I, whether I may claim the affection you promise, and which I shall be so proud to deserve. I flew up to my room, and presently found the ring; that inestimable treasure that was to act as a talisman, in restoring an alienated, and forsaken orphan, to the tenderest claims of affection, the sweetest bonds of society! I returned with it in my hand, and presenting it to the Count, he pressed the ring to his lips; then

then taking it to the candle for examination, he found it the identical ring he had been describing; his emotions at the sight of it were too much for him, and he sunk down in a kind of fit, in a chair that stood near him. We were all greatly alarmed; every means was used to restore him, and happily they answered our wishes, before the arrival of the surgeon we had sent for; that gentleman, however, thinking the operation of bleeding necessary to prevent a relapse; the Duchess insisted on the Count's accepting a bed at her house for the night, and forbid him, on pain of her displeasure, to mention the subject again that evening, which had affected him so deeply. He promised obedience to her grace's commands, on condition that he was permitted to embrace his newly found grand daughter. He took me in his arms, and pressing me to his bosom,

som, said, bless you my child! may heaven protect you as it has hitherto done, and may you continue still to deserve its protection. The servant then assisted the Count to his room; and the surgeon attended him, and after bleeding, ordered him to be put to bed, and kept perfectly quiet. I begged for the indulgence of retiring to my room, which was granted me. The good Count was much recovered next day, and after bestowing a thousand caresses on me, took his leave, that he might write to Vienna; and he kindly promised to send me the narrative of my father's life, as far as he knew of it. He performed his promise next day, when I received the enclosed packet, together with bank bills to the amount of £500, which he kindly calls a trifle to begin with; but when I read the affecting tale he sent me, and found I

had a mother, a tender, amiable, but suffering mother! Oh! how my fond heart throbbed, and how oft did I bedew the precious paper with my tears. Hasten, dear Madam, to send the certificate, and handkerchief; I wish the Count to see them, though I know he has no doubt concerning the truth of our relationship. Is it not a striking display of the infinite goodness of a watchful providence, that the very circumstance of my laying aside the name of Lenox, and assuming my own, intended by Mrs. Dudly to depress and mortify me, should be the means of exalting me to a station, superior to that from which I was so lately degraded. I know, my dear Madam, you will sympathize in the new, but charming sensations which now agitate the bosom of your ever affectionate,

LOUISA WELTZDEN.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

The Count de Weltzden's Packet, enclosed in the preceding.

Translated from the German.

MY DEAR LOUISA,

FROM the first moment I beheld you, I felt interested in your happiness; a kind of instinctive fondness drew me towards you. I once had a daughter as lovely as you are—she was about your age when I lost her. I have always fancied that I could trace a resemblance in your features, to those of my lamented Charlotte. Your eyes are indeed too much like her's to be

the effect of chance. There was a soft melancholy in her's, that is now more forcibly recalled to my remembrance, since the loss of your amiable friend Mrs. Lenox has diminished the lively brilliancy of your's. The moment the Duke of Northington introduced you to me by the name of Weltzden, my heart throbbed with unusual quickness, and as I sat at dinner, my imagination invented a thousand dear probabilities of your being related to me; and scarcely could I suppress my curiosity, so as to behave with decorum; but when on questioning you in the drawing-room, I found your father's name exactly corresponded with that of my unfortunate son, my agitation encreased, till hope became certainty, by the very assurance you thought would convince me of my error, namely, that your father was a common soldier.

Alas!

Alas! I had traced my hapless Frederick through that degrading station, to the fatal field where he fell the victim of a stern father's unrelenting anger. Let every parent, from my example, fear to turn an unpitying ear to an offending, but penitent child. How often have I bewailed with tears of bitter remorse, my cruelty to your unhappy father, when he implored my forgiveness, and kneeling at my feet, entreated me to shew that mercy to him, I hoped to receive myself from my heavenly father. Alas! my stubborn heart forgot the father in the offended noble, and I spurned him from me. He had committed, what I had been brought up to believe, an unpardonable fault—he had tarnished the lustre of a long line of noble ancestry, by marrying beneath him. The object of his affection was named Louisa Walstein, the daughter of a painter.

She was a celebrated beauty, and almost all the young noblemen at Vienna were enamoured with her, but they had too much worldly wisdom to offer marriage. But my son's passion was as pure as it was violent, he never harboured a dishonourable thought. Louisa's love equalled his own; they were privately married. Will you not hate me, my child, if I proceed? But I must obey the dictates of truth—I deserve the punishment of relating my own crimes—may that, and the heartfelt repentance that has embittered every moment of my life, since the death of the persecuted Frederick, be accepted as an atonement, by offended heaven! As soon as I was informed of the imprudent step he had taken, my anger knew no bounds, and in a paroxysm of rage, I cursed my wretched boy. Alas! I blush while I write it—had he offended

his

his God, and covered himself with the opprobium of real guilt, by becoming the seducer of innocence, I should have forgiven him—nay, supported, and defended him against the enraged relatives of the woman he had injured. Mistaken pride—ill-founded greatness, that placing all its nobility in long sounding names, and pompous titles, handed down from each proud possessor to his successor, without one merit but the claim of birthright—that mistaken pride, which forgets the real worth—the energy of soul, which forming the patriot, or the soldier, first won those honours from a grateful sovereign—forgets that to wear those badges of distinction, untarnished by the hand of time, their boaster must imitate his glorious ancestors—must elevate himself above the multitude, not by lofty titles, wide extending domains, or magni-

ficent equipage, but in that point where alone one man can rise superior to another, in the unshaken practice of virtue. The soul is the throne of true greatness—there, when benevolence teaches us to be kind, religion to be humble, and integrity to be just—when a nice sense of feeling makes us consider the honour of another as sacred as our own—in such a soil, the virtues may spring up so thick, as almost to make an angel of a man, and such a man may shine and be admired in an elevated rank; but without virtue, distinctions are nothing—they only serve to make vice more conspicuous—the glare of grandeur may dazzle the ignorant, but men of sense smile with contempt upon the empty shadow, and are as much awed by such dignified personages in their coroneted carriages, as they would be by a pageant of wooden kings at a

puppet

puppet shew. These reflections are the fruits of dear bought experience, and bitter remorse, and will prove to my Louisa, that affliction has amended my heart, and enlightened my understanding. But to proceed with my mournful tale. My son was entirely dependant upon me in point of fortune; I forbid that any farther remittances should be paid him; denied him admission to my house, and made myself more wretched than the child I abandoned! By means of a stratagem, he was introduced to my presence, when he used every argument affection and distress could dictate, to soften my obdurate heart, but in vain—I remained inexorable—unless he would renounce his wife, he must lose his father for ever—he heard me with a look of despair. Ah! my father, revoke that cruel sentence! Would you wish your son

to become the betrayer of unsuspecting innocence? I have offered the only terms I can accede to—separate yourself from Louisa, and I will provide for her, and let the folly you have committed in marrying her, be buried in oblivion. These, Sir, are the terms of your forgiveness? they are the only ones upon which it can ever be granted. Then, Sir, you see me for the last time; may heaven be more merciful to you, than you are to me! So saying, Frederick quitted the room; I exulted in the steadiness I had shewn, and thought the sacrifice I had made to my dignity truly heroic. In vain did my lovely Charlotte, who doated on her brother, try all her winning arts to reconcile me to him. Nothing moved me, and I heard, some weeks afterwards, that he had left Vienna, and had taken his wife with him. When he had been

been gone sometime, my resentment wore insensibly away, parental affection resumed its empire over my heart, and I began to wish I had been less severe—but it was too late; I never heard from my lost Frederick afterwards. I saw too, with unavailing regret, that grief had taken fast hold of my poor Charlotte—her eyes were continually filled with tears, and a fixed melancholy overspread her lovely countenance; when she saw me observing her she endeavoured to smile—but it was a faint effort—the sickly smile of grief, which seemed to paint her sorrow stronger even than her tears. I feared her delicate frame would sink under the burthen of smothered anguish, and that I should be left childless. I questioned her as to the cause of her distress; though alas! I too well imagined the source from whence it flowed. Her

answers confirmed my opinion—the loss of her beloved brother—the uncertainty of his fate preyed on her tender heart, and deprived her of health and rest. When she had made this confession, she threw herself on her knees before me, and entreated me to recall the injured Frederick, to pardon his disobedience, and restore him unconditionally to my favour. My heart was already softened; I wanted not much entreaty to promise Charlotte all she solicited; who can express the sweet creature's joy at finding me relent; she overwhelmed me with caresses, and called me by every tender name affection could invent; from that hour her spirits appeared to mend, and I had the delight of seeing the rose revive upon her faded cheek. Alas! this fair prospect was soon clouded over, when, notwithstanding all my enquiries to trace my unfortunate

unfortunate son, his destiny remained unknown. She relapsed into her former melancholy, her health gradually decayed, and though she never uttered a complaint, it was soon beyond the power of medicine to restore her. I had spared neither pains, nor expense to find my poor Frederick, and had offered him unconditional pardon in the most public manner, and promised that his wife should be received, and acknowledged, if he would return to his disconsolate father and sister; I also promised considerable rewards to any one who would inform me of his fate, but all in vain; the clouds of uncertainty still enveloped his destiny. Three years had now elapsed since he disappeared; poor Charlotte was tottering on the brink of the tomb, lamenting that she should die without knowing whether her brother survived her or not. About this

time,

time, I was called from her room one day, to speak to a person who was very urgent to see me, though he refused to tell his name. When I came into the room where he was waiting for me, I instantly recognised the brother of Louisa Walsten; my heart palpitated; it is some news of my son that has brought this man into my presence. The severity I had shewn his sister when she married my son, had excited his resentment; he was of a proud spirit; and when, on my repeating my cruel treatment, I endeavoured to atone for that part of it that had fallen on his sister, by shewing favour to her family; young Ferdinand treated my condescension with contempt, and refused to receive any thing at my hands. You are no doubt, said he, surprised, my Lord, to see me as a supplicant for your favour, but the contents of that letter, putting

putting one into my hand, would soften a more obdurate heart than mine; if your Lordship can do any thing for the wretched writer, it may soften the remorse you will not fail to feel when you peruse it. The letter was from Louisa, dated from Philadelphia, and was as follows.

My Dear Brother,

The authority that has hitherto kept me silent, is now no more—my beloved Frederick is dead—your unhappy sister is a widow. Ah! my brother, such a widow—it is well you do not know the full extent of my wretchedness—I have gone through great hardships since I saw you—far greater than you can imagine, but while Frederick lived, I thought nothing of them, but now I have no protector—no

friend

friend—I am very poor, but would to heaven poverty were the worst ill I had to encounter with—it is almost too cruel to tell you at this distance, of sufferings you cannot relieve, and yet my only hope of redress centers in you. How am I ever to get back to my own country, unless somebody supplies me with money, for so long a journey? this I know you cannot do—but ah! my dear brother, could you not apply to the cruel Count; perhaps by this time he relents, and is sorry for his cruelty to his amiable unhappy son. Alas! my lost Frederick, had you never seen Louisa, you might have been happy—might now have been caressed by a fond indulgent father, the ornament of a brilliant Court, the pride of an illustrious house—at once the delight of your equals, and the admiration of your inferiors—but now thou art

stretched,

stretched, a mangled corpse upon the field of battle, unheeded, unknown, unwept! but by thy wretched widow—and yet, Ferdinand, I did not neglect him—no, I went to seek the lord of my affections amidst heaps of slain; the timid Louisa feared not to encounter the horrors of approaching night; to step where carnage had been stalking before her; instinct led me to the spot where lay, for ever blighted by the hand of death, the loveliest form that e'er enshrined a noble soul, covered with wounds, some of which still poured a crimson stream. I found my Frederick—I knelt with stifled agony, and silent awe, to kiss his clay cold cheek; but, ah! the dreadful sequel—how shall I relate it? my infant—yes, my brother, I had an infant—the sole pledge of my lost Frederick's love. My sweet, dear little Louisa!

but

but now I have none—I am childless—I have lost my sweet babe—the only consolation heaven had left me—hold! hold! my bursting heart—the bare remembrance is distraction! and yet what do I remember? Alas! nothing, but that the clay kiss I stole from my dead husband's cheek, imported its coldness to my sinking heart, and clasping my weeping infant to my bosom, I fainted on the ground, beside the corpse of him my fancy doated on. I felt no more, till on my recovery I found myself in a kind of light waggon, which is used to transport the wounded from place to place. I raised myself as well as I could; the scene I had just witnessed had confused my senses, and at first I did not recollect my child; but as soon as I came to myself, I screamed aloud for my Louisa. One of the guards that was escorting the

waggon

waggon came, and asked me what I made such a bawling for? I entreated him to tell me what was become of my child. He said indeed he knew nothing of the matter; if I had one I ought to have taken care of it; he had enough to do without looking for other people's children; he thought I might be much obliged to him for bringing me away from such a dreadful place, as I was in. I heard no more, for I sunk again into a fainting fit, and did not recover from it, till the waggon had arrived at —— where the Americans had an hospital for their sick, and wounded. I there learnt that I had been picked up by a party of Americans, who were looking for some of their comrades, who had fallen in the battle, and whom they wished to bury. One of the men laying hold of my hand, said, I was too pretty to be dead, and swore he would

would take me, and make me his wife, if I came to myself again; but as to the child, he said he would not be plagued with that, and the barbarian left the little innocent to perish. This information threw me into the most violent fever, and I was many days delirious. I remained during my illness in the hospital, and was humanely taken care of; but when I got well, the horrid wretch who devoted my infant to destruction, came and claimed me as his wife. In vain I wept, entreated, disavowed all knowledge of him, he dragged me away, and obliged me to follow him to the camp, which was only a little distance from the village where the hospital was. I know not where his brutality might have ended, had it not been for the interposition of an officer, who rescued me from the jaws of the lion; but I soon found my situation

not

not less dangerous; the little remains of beauty that my emaciated face retained, had caught his eye, and he soon gave me to understand the return he expected for his interference in my favour. I was shocked at the proposal, and implored him with tears, not to drive me to despair. Generosity is inseparable from true bravery; he was moved by my mournful tale, and promised to protect me to the utmost of his power, from the insults my situation exposed me to, assuring me I had nothing farther to fear from him, and that he would remove me to a place of safety, the first opportunity that offered. He kept his word most religiously, and by his means I was sent to this city, where I was received, through his recommendation, into a quaker's family, who are distantly related to him, and where I am treated kindly, though the

place I fill in it is that of a menial servant. I have the care of two fine children, whose innocent prattle fill my heart with anguish, by recalling the sweet angel I have lost. My master has kindly undertaken to enquire for my sweet babe. But alas! I fear it will be to little purpose; no doubt the sweet innocent perished on the spot from whence her wretched mother was torn. Oh! that I could be assured my sweet child existed no longer—I should then be resigned tomy fate, and wait with patience, until it pleased the Almighty to re-unite me with all I held dear in those regions, where we shall part no more! My dear brother, I entreat you to go to the Count de Weltzden, and tell him, that his son is no more; that when his father's cruelty determined him to quit his own country, he enlisted himself as a volunteer

in Captain Wassenor's regiment of Hessian dragoons, then going to America, in the British service. That he had never disgraced his family, for he kept his birth a profound secret, and never would suffer me to write to my friends, lest any accident should discover his connections—that he fell in the battle of ——, covered with wounds, an honour—leaving a widow, and an infant, to deplore his loss—the child is lost—the wretched widow remains, and if his heart is yet capable of compassion, oh! let him extend the hand of charity, and restore her to her native country—it is all the dower I will ever ask—surely he will not refuse so small a boon.—Direct to me, at James Adamson's, merchant, Philadelphia. Farewell! forget not your unhappy sister.

L. WELTZDEN.

You

You will not doubt, I hope, that I complied with your poor mother's request. Alas! small was the recompence I could make her, for what she had suffered—but what I could I did. When she came to Vienna, I acknowledged her as my son's widow, and she resides in my palace at this day, little expecting the felicity that awaits her. She has been my only comfort, for many years. My poor Charlotte did not survive the knowledge of her brother's death above a few days. With her last breath she entreated me to repair, by my kindness to his widow, the injustice I had done him, and to spare no pains to find his hapless infant. I have fulfilled her injunctions, as far as I possibly could. But till this happy moment, my search for the sole heiress to my immense fortune, has been constantly crossed by disappointment,

and

and uncertainty. It was some years before I could gain any intelligence of Captain Wassenar, I then found that he was dead; but an officer in the same regiment, and who served under him in America, remembered something of a child being picked up in the field of battle, after the engagement at ——, and he believed it was taken care of by some English officer, but whom he could not recollect. Some enquiries were made of him, among the rest, concerning the family and connections of Frederick Wassenar; but as he could give no information about him, they made but little impression on his mind; he remembered, however, the circumstance of my son's interment, and that a ring which he wore on his finger, was taken off to be given to the person who took the child. He had heard a vague report afterwards,

that the child had died while with its nurse, of the small pox, at New York. This was all the information that I could ever obtain, and this was so vague and uncertain, that it only served to fill me with anxiety and distress. At length the hand of heaven led me to England, and pointed out to me the sweet object of my wishes and my cares, by a train of events too wonderfully connected to be the effect of chance. How do I burn with impatience to present you to your mother, to be the happy means of restoring to her that child my cruelty deprived her of, by driving her husband from his native land, to scenes of death and desolation. Look down, bright spirit of my injured Frederick! look down upon thy penitent father, and behold him happier than he ever dared to hope he should be, since first remorse preyed on his

aching

aching heart. He finds his daughter, his Louisa, the sole remains of his lamented son, adorned with every grace that loveliness can lend to goodness—rich in every virtue—every accomplishment that can give value to beauty!

Here ends the Baron's narrative. And ah! my dear Mrs. Mordant, think what varied emotions filled my bosom while perusing it—I have then a mother—a dear, amiable, a suffering mother! with what new sensations does that fond idea fill my heart—Ah! beloved, but unknown parent, how fondly does thy daughter, thy once forlorn, but now happy Louisa, long to throw herself at thy feet, to receive a mother's benediction—to assure thee of her duty, her affection, and to experience, for the first time, the rapture of a mother's embrace! Indeed, my good

friend, I am almost delirious, and can scarcely persuade myself that there is truth in these wonderful events. I fear it is some sweet vision that will glide from before my fascinated eyes, and awaken me to sorrow and disappointment.

No! no! it is all reality; the Count, my dear and honoured grandfather, has just been here. He pressed me to his heart, called me his dear child, and shewed me the letter he had been writing to my mother, to desire her to come immediately to England. His political situation prevents his going for her; but he has taken every precaution to render her journey as safe as it can be in these perilous times; and in the mean time every thing is to remain a secret. I can write no more now, my dear Madam, the tumult of affection, delight, and anxiety,

are

are too mighty for me, I must moderate my transports, and endeavour to receive the bounty of God with the same calmness that I bore his late severe correction.

Your's,

L. W.

LETTER VIII.

Lord Ormond to Mr. Travers.

ONCE again has that stranger, happiness, deigned to visit my heart—once again may I call upon my good friend, to congratulate me—I have found the lost treasure, the object of all my wishes—all my hopes—the amiable, the lovely Lady Emily Egerton. Methinks, I hear you cry, how, how, was this luckly event brought about? But take the circumstances as they arose—you shall enjoy the pleasure of surprise, as I did. I told you in my last letter, I believe, that I meant to spend the beginning of the shooting season with Mountague, at Fancourt;

court; he absolutely worried me into a compliance with his invitation, for the situation of my mind for these several months past, was not at all congenial to the society I was to expect to meet with at Fancourt. Mountague himself is the best of the giddy set, of which I have dubbed him captain; yet, notwithstanding the natural conformability of my temper, if I may be allowed the expression, I find him sufficiently tiresome sometimes—what then had I to expect from his corps? However, as I did not like to give him pain, by denying his earnest request, I complied with it, and have been richly rewarded for my compliance. When I parted from Paget, I went immediately to Fancourt; and the first days I was there, were spent in fagging all the mornings after a few poor innocent partridges, most of whom we succeeded

ceeded in either laming, or killing, then, triumphantly returning at eve with spoils, as the song says; the nights were spent in the orgies of Bacchus, by all but me. Nor were they for some time conscious of my evasion, but supposing that I had drank as often as they had, declared the next morning, that I was the best man in the company, for I had seen them all out. I smiled at their mistake, and recollecting your wise remark, that it is unbecoming in young people to censure the conduct of others, and that when they see any thing reprehensible, they should avoid, but not condemn it, unless the habits of friendship authorize them to suppose their advice will be kindly received, I was silent on the subject; but I did not forget what you said of the exception to this general rule, namely, that no consideration of inferiority of years should

make

make a young man bear with impunity, an open attack upon his religious, or moral principles, nor suffer them to be treated with levity, or ridicule. The party consisted of Egremont, Percival, and Spencer, or, Parson Jack, as he is stiled by the gay fraternity; the two former are intimates of Harry Paget's, and more tolerable companions than professed rakes generally are; the latter I met at Northington Castle, where he served as a foil for the worthy Orme. I think him the most disagreeable animal I ever saw; he is neither quite a monkey, nor a man, but a very unpleasing melange of both. A few traits I shall have occasion to give of him, bye and bye, will bring you acquainted with him in a trice; he is puffed up with a vanity, the most despicable that ever inflated the heart of man; he imagines himself very hand-

some, and is continually courting the mirror, and appearing at every glance to imbibe fresh inducements for the divine contemplation of his own sweet person; this, and the unceasing display of a white hand, are on the monkey side of him; of his manly exploits we will talk more anon. Lord Arthur Tylney was with us too, who is merely what may be called, a titled groom; the stable was certainly robbed, when he was made a Lord. I question whether Newmarket can produce a more complete adept in the science of groomery, than his noble Lordship. I suspect his mother was a tartar, from the strong predilection he shews for horseflesh. On no other subject can he talk for one quarter of an hour; and I am sure that lady will have reason to be vain, whose attractions are sufficiently powerful to rival Jenny Meggot,

his

his Lordship's bay filly. On the fourth day after my arrival at Liberty Hall, as the sons of liberty have dubbed it, Percival got so violent a headache from the fatigues of the morning, that although he scorned to indulge the impulse of nature, by exchanging the noisy dining-parlour for a quiet bedchamber, he was wholly incapacitated from partaking of the general inebriety. He, however, contented himself with watching the progress of the circling glass, and presently smoaked me, as he called it. D—n it, said he, here is Ormond queering us all, and drinking water, by all that's pitiful. A pint bumper—a pint bumper—and fair play. The toast was reiterated from every mouth at once, and Mountague filling a pint goblet with Maderia, it was presented to me by Egremont, who swore I should drink it instantly.

The noise was so great, that for some minutes I could not make myself heard, but having repeatedly called for silence, I at length obtained it; the cry of hear him! hear him! died away into still attention. Gentlemen, said I, permit me in the first place to enquire, what is implied by calling this place Liberty Hall. That every body should do as they like in it, to be sure, was answered by two or three voices at once. Well then, rejoined I, I claim that privilege, and appeal to the laws of hospitality for protection. I prefer water to Maderia, why may I not be permitted to enjoy my propensity, as well as you your's? Because it is a d—nd foolish propensity, said Lord Arthur, and ought not to be indulged; a man might as well say, that he liked Tom Heathcott's old cropped poney, better than my bay filly. It is not fair play, said Egremont,

mont, we ought to be all on a footing. I never thought Ormond was a flincher till now, said Percival, nor should I have detected him, if I had not been on the list of invalids. It is a severe sarcasm on the rest of the company, and ought not to be permitted, said Parson Jack. And why a sarcasm, asked I, I did not condemn, I only differed from you. True, answered he, but your's was a silent condemnation, and therefore more severe. I never should have expected a lesson against sobriety from a son of the church, said I, smiling. It would be a vain effort for Jack Spencer to preach in favour of that virtue, said Percival, who drank claret enough to drown all the bench of bishops, before he took priest's orders. Nay now, Percival, you flatter me, cried the egregious coxcomb, though I believe I have done my duty in

that

that way. It was once said of me, that I had cracked more bottles of wine, and rode more miles foxhunting in one year, than any other young man of fashion could boast of—I believe it was Hugh Trevor that said so, but you know he will romance a little, rather given to exaggeration. For my own part, as I never keep an account of my transactions, I cannot affirm the truth of this anecdote, though I think it extremely possible—extremely possible, indeed. Could you have supposed, my good friend, that there existed a human being so depraved, as to make a boast of intemperance, and think himself flattered by an accusation of excess? To this amiable speech I made no reply; but Percival said, with a sarcastical smile, I believe, Jack would not be so fond of hunting, if Lady Sadlife's approbation did not act as

a kind

a kind of stimulus to his inclination. Fye Percival, you are too bad now, quite personal, upon honour; this is not fair, interrupted Parson Jack, if Lady Sadlife has penetration, how can I help that—I know you are all dying with envy—and then he cast a look at the pier glass opposite to him. Lady Sadlife is a charming woman, to be sure; a very charming woman, but so are many more; Lucy Waters for example, cried Percival. I must positively call you to an account Percival, said Jack Spencer, how could you think of mentioning that unfortunate girl; upon my honour, I have more than once been ready to think it a misfortune to be handsome, since that affair. Nay, I think, rejoined Percival, she will make an excellent parson's wife, when you are forced to reside at the rectory in Cumberland, and you know that

will

will soon be the case. For heaven's sake, spare me, cried the terrified coxcomb, if you go on at this rate I shall be perfectly annihilated—I vow you are the most petrifying creature in nature—who could possibly put such sombre thoughts into your head. Lucy Waters a wife, and the rectory at ——, for a residence—why did not you add, a great wig, and a pair of gambadoes, to complete the picturesque view. But I call for the original question, from which you have entirely departed. Is Ormond to substitute water for wine? I believe that was it. Certainly not, said Montague, unless he can give an unanswerable reason for so doing. I will bet a thousand pounds, cried Lord Arthur, that he cannot do that; he might as well attempt to trot his baldface hunter against Nutcracker, and no man in his senses would do that. If I

cannot,

cannot, said I, give a reason that you would think unanswerable, for preferring water to wine, I can at least give an excellent one, why you should desist from opposing my following my own inclination. What is it? what is it? cried every one at once. Those who vote against my freedom, will vote me out of the company, said I, as I shall immediately quit it, if I am not permitted to do as I like. Then, by heavens, you shall drink old Neptune's fish pond dry, before I interfere with you again, said Montague, for I will never vote you out of the company. You are, and ever will be an oddity Ormond, said Percival. No wonder of that I am sure, said Parson Jack, when you consider what a piece of formality was his tutor. To be sure, drawling Mr. Travers, is a good sort of man—but then, he is like nobody else—and a man might

might as well bespeak a place in Westminster Abbey at once, who is determined to differ from the beau monde. If differing from the beau monde, of which Mr. Spencer is the most perfect model, be a fault, I know not a more faulty person than Mr. Travers. There can never be a doubt who would best become the mitre; but every body is not born to adorn high rank. The double sense of this speech reaching his understanding through the medium of his vanity, he took the compliment couched in it to himself, and the rest of the evening passed away in noisy goodhumour, and nonsense. Lord Arthur sold two horses, and bought one, and then they all reeled off to bed, vowing that they would take me next morning to breakfast at a farm house, about three miles off, where Lucy Waters's father lives. The poor girl it seems has fallen in love with

with this sweet Adonis Jack Spencer, who had lodgings at her father's one shooting season, and no doubt took pains enough to make the silly girl admire him; and now he pretends to be quite *obsèdée* by the bare mention of her name. The old farmer knows nothing of the amour, or the parson would find warm work I fancy, for by the farmer's conversation, there seems no want of spirit in his composition, though a great original. He is a poet, a politician, and a sort of village journalist, for he keeps an exact diary of every transaction worth remembering which happens within reach of his knowledge; and can tell you who have been sheriffs, and members for the county, for forty years back. As they had been roasting the poor parson most woefully about pretty Lucy, I must own I had some curiosity to see her; and therefore joined

their

their party in the morning with great willingness. As we were walking along, Percival said, Jack, have you agreed with any body to take your part, in case the farmer should have smoaked you; for I think it a necessary precaution; if he should lay in ambush for you with that pretty little shalalee that he generally carries about with him, you would find him more than you could manage; and who knows, perhaps Lucy has confessed her unalterable affection, and your cruelty—did you answer her last letter? How can you be so ridiculous Percival? I have told you ten thousand times, that the girl is nothing to me; how can I help her taking a foolish fancy to me. Foolish enough, heaven knows, rejoined Percival, and as it is a thousand to one if ever you meet so silly a person again, I am of opinion you ought to take her for better

for

for worse; upon my honour, I think it would be quite pastoral; and then the old man could make a ballad upon the occasion, and sing it himself. In this manner did the unmerciful Percival torment poor Jack, till we came in sight of the house. Within a hundred yards of the door is a little gate, by which you enter the orchard, in which the house stands, and till you pass that, your approach is concealed by a very high hedge. As I went through the gate, I saw a very elegant woman, with a book in her hand, sitting beneath the shade of a large elm. The moment she observed us advancing, she hastily left her seat, and entered the house, and scarcely could she disengage her white flowing robe, that had caught the latch of the door, before we approached, but too late to see her face. She ascended the narrow stair case, and was out of sight in a moment,

moment, leaving us all equally struck with the uncommon beauty of her figure. Mr. Waters, who was in the farm yard when we entered, being called, received us with true old English hospitality, and opening the door of his old fashioned, but neat parlour, begged us to walk in, and be seated; this, said he, is an unlooked for honour and happiness, my noble friends; who would ever have thought of young gentlemen getting up so early—have you breakfasted my noble squire, turning to Mountague. No farmer, replied he, I am come to breakfast with you, if you have no objection, and have brought these rakeshames with me, to partake of your bounty; we are going to shoot the poor innocent partridges, as soon as you have fortified us against the fatigue. I am proud of the honour you do me, onble squire, replied the old man, but you have

have not introduced that young gentleman to me, Sir, and you know I am a friend to old forms. Oh! very right, said Mountague, I beg both your pardons, this is Lord Ormond, one of the best young men in England—and this is Mr. Waters, a farmer, a politician, and a poet. We bowed and so forth, and then the old farmer ran to call his dame, and Lucy, to wait upon us, and ordered half a hundred things in a minute. Mr. Waters, cried Percival, where is your daughter; was that Miss Waters who went up stairs when we came in? Oh! no, God bless you, replied the farmer, that was quite another guess body from my daughter. No, no, Lucy is a fine girl, a very fine girl, just like her mother; but not such an angel as that you saw pass up stairs. Lucy is making butter now, as busy as a bee, and a nice hand she is at it; there is no such but-

ter

ter as our's comes to market. Oh! she will make a notable wife, continued he, clapping his hand in the eagerness of his discourse, upon Jack Spencer's shoulder. I thought Percival would have burst his sides with laughing; upon my soul, said he, I never knew any thing happen so apropos—do you know, farmer, my friend the parson has been teazing me a hundred times to break the ice for him to you; he has a great regard for your daughter, but he is afraid to own it, least it should displease you. Good heaven! said Jack, what do you mean Percival? I am sure I never—I did not—it is the most distant thing—well, well, never mind, interrupted the farmer, never mind, I shall not meddle nor make, if you can agree between yourselves, it is all very well; I shall give Lucy seven hundred pounds, and that's no bad thing you know, besides

Lucy

Lucy is none of your fine misses, that cannot mend her own stockings: so settle it between you. Oh! she will make a notable parson's wife, laying his hand again upon Spencer's shoulder, who was biting his lips in silent indignation. Presently in came Lucy, smiling, and blushing, with the tea-things; all of which she had nearly let fall, when her cruel lover bounced out of the chair that was next to her, without asking her how she did. There, there, says the old man, laughing, and rubbing his hands together, only see the shy ways of lovers; why they can hardly look at one another—but lord bless me, I was just the same when I was young myself—my dame and I used to look just as sheepish when we met, as they two do now, and out of the room went the farmer, laughing at the good joke. His dame, as he calls her, then came in, a good

portly, motherly looking woman, plain in her dress, but easy and pleasing in her manners, and something of a rustic dignity about her, that took my fancy vastly. She bid us welcome, in a voice that was unused to the deceitful ceremony of modern manners; it was not the whine of servility, it was the genuine tone of primitive hospitality, and you felt the welcome she gave you. She was attended by a rosy looking girl, loaded with toast, bread and butter, boiled eggs, frilled ham, and a long etcetera of rural delicacies. The good lady took her seat at the breakfast table, and made the tea, while her daughter Lucy poured out libations of fragrant coffee, and assisted the maid in handing the good things to the company; her blushing cheeks, and downcast eyes, made evident the confusion she felt at the thoughtless joke of the still more

thoughtless

thoughtless Percival, and I felt extremely for the poor girl's awkward situation, particularly as I observed, that her angry lover shot glances of displeasure at her every time their eyes met. For the sake of conversation, I asked Mrs. Waters where her husband was; she replied, oh! Sir, he is just now in the height of his glory; we have a great many poor boys that work for us about the farm, and as most of them are either friendless, or of very poor parents, my husband makes it a rule to distribute among them every morning, what remains of our provisions of the past day; not the most trifling crust is suffered to be wasted, we have wooden bowls on purpose to save the broken victuals in, and they are kept as nice and clean as the best joint of meat we ever set by; he portions these out among these poor children, and a comfortable

meal it makes them; and this custom has very salutary effects in making them diligent, as my husband always takes care to put a piece of pudding, or something nicer than the rest, in one portion, and that is given to the one who has best deserved it; and when they have all behaved alike, it is given in turns, without partiality, so that it seldom happens there is any jealousy, or quarrels among them. We all highly commended the charity, and goodnature of our host, who just then entered to us. Pray Mrs. Waters, said Jack Spencer, with an eagerness that made the roses fade from poor Lucy's cheeks, can you tell me who that angelic creature was, who retired with such precipitancy at our entrance? upon my word, young gentleman, you do not ask me a fair question. What, I suppose, you have been tampering with my dame here, and she

she will not tell you? No, indeed, said the good dame, the gentleman has asked me no such question; but the young lady is a very good, and a very beautiful lady to be sure, but we are not at liberty to tell who she is at present; indeed there is hardly any one knows she is here, and it was a great chance you saw her, for she seldom goes outside the doors. As soon as breakfast was over, we took our leaves, and proceeded on our shooting expedition—Percival rallying, and Spencer sulky—at a little distance from the house, as we were passing over a gap into a turnip field, Egremont behind, and I before, by some unlucky chance, his gun caught in a bramble, and he attempting to disengage it rather too hastily, it went off, and the contents carrying away a large portion of my coat, passed under my right arm, made a pretty considerable, though not a

dangerous wound; the blood that flowed plentifully, alarmed all my companions, who insisted upon carrying me upon a hurdle, back to the farm house; however, I presently convinced them, that I could walk, but yielded to their entreaties of returning to Mr. Waters's, to get the wound dressed, as his dame is a professed village doctress. As soon as we entered the orchard, we met the good farmer, to whom they related the accident; he conducted us to the house, and entering it, called aloud to his dame, make hast to the parlour, my dear, for Lord Ormond is shot—a very dangerous wound I fear indeed. He had no sooner uttered these words, than a loud shriek alarmed us all, and the noise of something falling on the floor in the room overhead, convinced us that somebody had sunk down in a fit. A palpitation seized my heart, and forgetting

my

my wound, I sprung forward, and ascended the stairs with Mr. Waters, whose countenance betrayed his terror; he imagined, as he afterwards told us, that his dame had swoonded. The door of the room from whence the noise had proceeded was open, and stretched lifeless on the floor, I beheld my adored, my long lost Emily. I raised her from the ground, and began to chafe her temples, entreating her, by every tender epithet, to smile once more upon her faithful Ormond. Mrs. Waters soon came to our assistance, and by the help of a few harts-horn drops, revived the suspended animation of the charming Emily. She opened her lovely eyes, and looking wildly about, exclaimed, where is he? Where is Lord Ormond? Is he really killed? No, my angelic Emily, the faithful Ormond is now beside you, cried I, and will for ever bless the

happy accident which has restored to him the object of his best affections—the treasure he has so long sought in vain. Then there has been an accident, cried she, still looking wild—alas! alas! I see there has, continued she, lifting her robe, which was stained with the blood that still flowed from my wound. Oh! Lord Ormond, do not deceive me, you are wounded, dreadfully wounded—have you had no assistance—Mrs. Waters, pray examine Lord Ormond's wound. Oh! I shall die with terror; and down she sunk again, in a fainting fit. Mrs. Waters now insisted upon my quitting the room, and ordered me to go into the parlour, and she would attend me as soon as she had put Lady Emily under her daughter's and the maid's care. I obeyed, though reluctantly, and on coming down stairs, found a surgeon that Mountague had

had been for, on one of Mr. Waters's horses, and had luckily met him half way between the farm, and the town where he lived. He examined the wound, and found it to be little more than skin deep. Mrs. Waters soon joined us, and supplying us with every necessary, my wound was presently dressed. She assured me, that Lady Emily was recovered, and waited only for an assurance of my safety to be quite herself again. I begged Mrs. Waters to let me see the lovely girl, before I departed, but this she strictly forbid, alledging that Lady Emily's spirits having been so much flurried, it was necessary to keep her very quiet. Mountague's carriage being come, I took my leave, promising the good dame to wait upon her again next day—and you may be sure I was punctual to the appointment. I then had the inexpressible joy of seeing my di-

vine Emily, who received me with that dignified sweetness, so peculiar to herself. I learnt from her own dear mouth, the strange train of circumstances that had attended her, from the time she left Northington Castle, till the period of her finding an assylum from persecution, in the lowly, but hospitable dwelling of farmer Waters. I must wave giving this interesting narrative now, having already swelled this packet beyond the limits of a letter, adieu,

Faithfully your's,

ORMOND.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Lord Ormond in continuation.

I WILL give you Lady Emily's narrative in her own words, and leave your fancy to supply all the tedious etcetra, which for the sake of brevity I omit. Who that had to speak of that angelic creature, could condescend to dwell upon the trifling minutes of less interesting subjects? to begin then.

The interest your Lordship so kindly takes in the welfare of a forlorn creature like me, said the sweet girl, entitles you to

my confidence, those only know the true value of friendship, who have felt the cruel attacks of a malignant enemy. My persecutions are not yet ended—the transient glance I caught of my beloved father—the faint glimmerings of his awakened affection, of the particulars of which the worthy Mr. Orme informed your Lordship, dear as they were to my heart, proved the ultimate ruin of my peace—from that moment the Duchess's hatred blazed into fury—her housekeeper, the sordid creature who could basely perform whatever her more base employer could suggest, was fixed upon as the agent to put in execution a scheme of the Duchess's, which for cruelty of design, I hope has not often been equalled, even in the annals of persecution itself. To render the performance of this diabolical transaction unsuspected and secure,

cure, my dear Miss Evelyn, the faithful companion of my solitude, the tender friend and sympathiser in my distress, was removed far away, and that in a manner too artfully glossed over with the appearance of chance, to awaken the most wary to suspicion. A day or two after my father's recovery from the accident that introduced me to his presence, Emma came into my room, with a countenance full of pleasure, and told me that the Duchess had just been most unusually gracious to her, and had indulgently proposed her accompanying Miss Egerton, on a visit to Lady G——, with whom she was to be for a few days. I hope you will not seriously miss me, my dear Lady Emily, said she, taking my hand; if I thought you would, I should not hesitate declining the proposed excursion. Dear, generous girl, replied I, to say I shall not

miss

miss you, would be false—but be assured, I shall feel more pleasure in the idea of your tasting a few days liberty, than I could even in your dear society, if I knew the selfish enjoyment was procured at your expence. We then talked over together, the little schemes of pleasure projected for the ensuing few days; and I am sure I enjoyed the perspective as much as the good-natured Emma, who went herself to the library, for a fresh supply of books for me, and picked out those she thought best calculated to wear away the tedious hours of total solitude. She assured me the Duchess had promised her, that Mrs. Morgan, the housekeeper, should pay me unremitting attention during her absence, and that Mr. Orme should direct my evening studies in geography and Italian as usual; thus my dear Lady Emily, added she, I trust I shall

be

be at home again, before you have had time to reflect upon my absence. Alas! neither she nor I could forsee the dreadful fate that awaited me. The very evening after her departure, Mrs. Morgan came into my apartment, and without any kind of ceremony, began taking out changes of linen from my drawer, and packing them into a travelling trunk which stood in my closet. On my asking the reason of her proceeding, she told me with a coarse laugh, that the Duchess thinking change of air would be of service to my health, had ordered her to prepare for a little journey the next morning, in which she, Mrs. Morgan, was to accompany me; and as we must be off by sunrise, my dear, said the hateful woman, it is fitting we should be ready to night. A sad presentiment sized my heart, and filled my eyes with tears, which Mrs. Morgan observing,

observing, she said, bless me, what's the matter now, sure one place of confinement is as good as another, and if you behave well, perhaps they will send the old parson after you, so do not put your finger in your eye. I was stung at her unfeeling familiarity; but, alas! where could I seek redress. Without noticing what she said, I begged she would step down to Mr. Orme, and tell him I wished to speak to him for five minutes. No, thank ye, my dear, I am not such a chicken as that, neither, replied she; what, I warrant me, you think if you get hold of him, you could send him whining to the Duke, and prevent the journey, and make another rumpus in the house. No, no, Miss, if I thought as you was to see any body before you goes, I should not have told you nothing of the matter; for after all, it is nothing to you, for you know

you

you be not compus mentus, as the saying is—so you be no more than nothing at all—you know you be what is called allyon to society. To this learned harrangue I could only answer by my tears. As soon as Mrs. Morgan left the room, I wrote a note with a pencil, for the ill-natured woman carried away my ink stand, with a significant nod, in hope that some opportunity would offer of sending it to Mr. Orme. However, in this expectation I was disappointed; no creature approached me, but Mrs. Morgan, who brought me my supper about eight o'clock, and told me I had better go to bed early, for she would call me by sunrise. My heart was too full to eat any thing, and I begged her to take it away, as she brought it. She muttered something about my being stomachful, and that I should be better disciplined bye and

bye,

bye, and then left me to my own melancholy reflections, which would have been too much for me, had not my reliance upon that God, who has declared himself the defender of the innocent, supported me with a fortitude which surprised myself on this trying occasion. After recommending myself to his protection, I recovered my serenity so perfectly, that I fell into a sweet sleep, from which I did not awake till Mrs. Morgan stood at my bedside, and told me it was time to rise. I will not attempt to describe my sensations at quitting my paternal abode; I had, indeed, left it once before—and for a foreign land—but then, the supporting presence of my more than father, my reverend Mr. Orme, prevented me from feeling more than half the horrors of banishment; but now, in the hands of a sordid wretch, capable of acting the most

cruel

cruel part—deprived of all succour—torn from my native home—from my half relenting parent—ignorant of my destination—but too well acquainted with the disposition of my enemy to cherish a hope, that it could be a happy one. Ah! my Lord, cried the sweet Emily, clasping her hands together, was not that a trying moment? However, continued she, smiling, for she saw how deeply her mournful apostrophe had affected me, you see I have surmounted all those mountains of terror, and for me the bright star of hope once more illumes the dreary path of sorrow—but I shall tire your Lordship with unnecessary digression. My unfeeling companion, with the assistance of La Fite, the Duchess's French valet, placed me in a post-chaise that waited for us, and following me herself, immediately drew up all the blinds,

blinds, and the four horses set off with us full gallop; we travelled all that day, and the succeeding night, without stopping for any thing, but to change horses. Mrs. Morgan had amply provided for our refreshment in the chaise, of which I was obliged to partake, through downright faintness, though my own thoughts gave me little inclination for eating. About the middle of the next day, we arrived at the end of our journey, and the blinds being pulled down, I found we had stopped at the door of a genteel looking house, in a very lonely situation. A short, dark complexioned man came out to greet us, and the door being opened, we got out of the chaise, and ascended a flight of steps to the hall door. But how did my heart sink within me, when on casting my eyes up to the windows, I perceived they were all close grated with iron

iron bars. This, then, said I, mentally, is to be my prison, and my sepulchre. I was not long ignorant of the nature of my new abode, for as an ill-looking servant was shewing us the way to the parlour of this dreary mansion, I heard the man who came out to us on our arrival, say to Mrs. Morgan—Is she pretty tractable and quiet? Pretty well, replied she, but very artful; you must take care, or she will slip through your fingers. Never fear me, said he, grinning, I am used to such gentry; the iron bars will keep her safe I warrant me; and if she should be rumbustical, the strait waistcoat will tame her. I am then in a madhouse, said I, my legs shaking under me so violently, that I sunk into the first chair in the parlour. And what if you are, Miss, said the horrid man, in a menacing tone—you seem a very fit guest for such a house, you look

look as wild as a hunted cat, as a body may say. Oh! merciful God protect me, cried I, wringing my hands in agony. Yes, yes, Miss, he will protect you, and we will protect you, and so you will be doubly taken care of; and then the wretch laughed at his own profane wit. The horror of my feelings at that dreadful moment cannot be described, a kind of suffocating fullness seized my heart, my breath grew short, and had not a flood of tears come to my relief, I believe all my sorrows would have ended there. Excess of weeping brought on hysterics, and to my great comfort, the horrid master withdrew, and sent a nurse to the assistance of Mrs Morgan, who could scarcely hold me. The nurse advised me to be put to bed, which was done as soon as I was able to walk up stairs—and oh! how fervently did I pray to heaven to release me

from

from the horrors that awaited me, by suffering me to rise no more. As soon as I seemed a little composed, Mrs. Morgan left me, and I saw her no more; at quitting the room I head her say to the nurse, in a whisper, take care of the girl—do not let any mischief befall her, for perhaps one day or another, we may be called to an account about her. Your injunctions are quite needless, replied the nurse, thank heaven I want no inducement, but my own inclination, to be humane. The sweet lamb shall find a mother in me—my heart revived at the sound of those kind words, but I did not seem to hear them, till Mrs. Morgan was gone. I then drew aside the curtain gently, to examine the features of my new friend. The expression of her countenance was benevolence itself, and when on hearing me move she turned to look at me,

a tear

a tear stood in her eye. She came to my bedside, how are you now, my pretty dear, said she kindly; you must not take on so violently, or you will hurt your health. I thanked her, and told her, such kindness as her's would soon cure me, but I begged I might not see that dreadful man, who had frightened me so at my arrival. Oh! do not alarm yourself, my dear, the doctor does not visit his patients above once a week, unless their cases require more frequent attendance. A doctor is he, said I, and has he patients—sure he does not reckon me one, for I had nothing the matter with me, till I entered his vile house; but now I recollect some shocking things he said as I went into the parlour, that made me think I was in a mad house—tell me, dear nurse, am I right in my conjectures? when I asked this question, the horror of my situation struck

so full upon my mind, that the bed shook under me. My pretty love, be composed, replied the compassionate nurse, let the house be what it will, you shall be safe in it, or I will forfeit my life. When you are better able to bear conversation, I will tell you every thing you want to know; in the mean time, rely upon me that nothing shall hurt you, and try and take a little repose; the terrors your poor mind has suffered, are enough to turn your brain, and make you really what you are said to be. I will not quit you, my child, so sleep securely, no body shall approach you, I give you my word. There was something so sincere in her manner, so open in her countenance, that I could not doubt the truth of her assurances, and a momentary joy filled my heart, at the unexpected acquisition of a friend. I held my hand out to her in token

of gratitude, and composing myself on my pillow, fell into a sound sleep, from which it was many hours before I awoke, so thoroughly was I overcome by agitation and fatigue. Mrs. Waters, that was the nurse's name, was close by my bedside when I awoke, and on my assuring her that I was able to rise, she assisted me in doing so, and then kindly fetched me some coffee, which in a goodnatured, but positive manner she made me drink, and insisted also upon my eating some nice toast, which she told me she had made herself for me. In short, her kind winning ways so thoroughly reconciled me to my situation, that I regained my usual serenity and chearfulness, in a manner astonishing to myself. At my request, the good nurse partook of my bedchamber, for I really felt a dread of being left to myself, lest I should see the man I had

had such a horror of; however, several days elapsed without any interruption from him, or any one else; the good Mrs. Waters doing every thing for me, without assistance. When I had been in my confinement nearly a week, my new friend told me, that she thought I was sufficiently recovered from my terrors, to bear a walk in the garden; but I am afraid the high walls will surprise you a little, my dear. Oh! no, said I, for I have been in a nunnery, the gardens of which were encompassed with walls that seemed to reach the skies. Well, then, said Mrs. Waters, so much the better—but perhaps, my dear, you will meet some melancholy objects—however, arm yourself with fortitude; air is absolutely necessary to you, and you need fear nothing from those you meet, as none are permitted to walk about, but those that are perfectly harmless. Thus

prepared by Mrs. Waters's kind caution, I ventured into the garden, with her for my protectress and guide. At the foot of the great stair-case I met Doctor Hill, the man I dreaded so much; however, he did not take the trouble to address himself to me, but enquired of the nurse, whether I went on well, and was tractable; on her answering in the affirmative, he suffered us to pass, and happy was I when I had escaped him, for the sight of him made me tremble so, that I could not have stood, had I not held by Mrs. Waters's arm. When I came into the garden, my sensibility was indeed most forcibly awakened by the unhappy objects that surrounded me—who, lost to all sense of their own misfortune, were enjoying themselves in the indulgence of their own wild fancies. Some fantastically adorned with scraps of finery, were walking up

and

and down with all the dignity of assumed grandeur; others were carving uncouth figures on the barks of the trees, whose mutilated trunks stood as sad memorials of the miseries their branches had sheltered. I was too much affected to remain long in the garden, nor did Mrs. Waters persuade me to do so. As we returned to the house, she told me with a smile, that I had behaved so well in my first excursion, that she hoped soon to treat me with a longer, and more agreeable walk. When we were returned to my apartment, she began to entertain me with a history of herself. She told me, that a sister of her's had married Doctor Hill, and that coming to nurse her in her last illness, she had, after her sister's death, by way of assisting her brother-in-law, superintended several of his female patients; their sufferings had awakened her compas-

sion, and the cruelty and unfeelingness of the common nurses, distressed her; these considerations had induced her to remain in her brother's house, who much wished for such an assistant; and being a single body, with a very slender income, she thought there was no way in which she could make herself so useful to society, as the one she had chosen. And I assure you, my dear, continued she, I have had great reason to applaud myself for the resolution I have taken since my abode in this house, for numberless are the aching hearts it has pleased heaven to make me the humble instrument of comforting. My brother is very harsh in his manners, however, he never disputes a point with me, for he well knows my soothing ways have oftener succeeded in restoring his patients to sanity, than any of his coercive measures. As for you, I have many reasons

sons for thinking, that there is some deep villany in your confinement. I have been too long used to people of deranged intellects, to doubt an instant of the perfect good order of your's. I believe my brother is deceived, I do not think him wicked enough to receive a person into his house, knowing them to be in their right mind. The wildness of your looks, occasioned by a fatiguing journey, and the terrors of your own imagination, but too well corresponded with the description given of you in the letter which prepared us for your reception; your exclamations, and the fits you fell into, all confirmed my brother in his opinion, and the great horror you have felt, at the idea of seeing him, having induced me to keep him from your presence, has still continued him in his error; but whenever, my dear creature, you can prevail upon your-

self to see Doctor Hill, and converse with him, I am sure he will become a convert to my way of thinking. I could not help throwing my arms round the good Mrs. Waters's neck, and embracing her with the tenderness of a child. Ah! my Lord, was she not a mother to me! She seemed affected by my gratitude, and kissing my forehead, called me a bewitching girl. However, I begged my interview with Doctor Hill, might be deferred a little longer, as I feared I was not yet equal to conversing calmly with him, and if, said I, any emotions of pertubation should escape me, perhaps he might only be the more confirmed in his error. Mrs. Waters approved of my prudence, and said, it should be as I liked. I then related to her, without reserve, every particular of my melancholy life; and oh dear! how the good woman wept over the

sad

sad tale; and when I had concluded it, she clasped me fondly in her arms, and told me, I need not fear for the future, for she would insure me the means of letting good Mr. Orme know the place of my confinement; was not that kind? Indeed, the whole tenor of her behaviour was such as was perfectly calculated to set my heart at ease, and I no longer lamented my confinement, except when the thought of some kind absent friend stole across my imagination, and called forth the sigh of affection; (as Lady Emily spoke these words, a deep blush passed over her lovely cheek—perhaps she felt conscious that she had sometimes bestowed a thought on the happy Ormond. Oh! I would not part with that flattering hope, for millions — after a momentary pause, she continued thus)—I was now, by the interposition of my kind nurse, per-

mitted to walk with her in the fields, and in a very short time recovered my health and spirits. I then told Mrs. Waters, that I thought I was able to venture upon an interview with the dreaded Doctor Hill, and the very same evening, I attended Mrs. Waters into the parlour which I had been shewn into the day of my arrival. The Doctor joined us at tea, and having been prepared by Mrs. Waters, behaved in a more gentle manner than I thought he was capable of. He talked to me on a variety of subjects, and when he left the room I heard him say, you are right sister Waters, perfectly right, that young lady is no more mad, than I am. There my dear, says the good woman to me, when we were alone, you see my brother is not such a dreadful creature as you thought him, and I can tell you he no longer considers you as his patient; he has given me

leave

leave to let you write to any friend you please, so now I think you may make yourself happy. Your Lordship will readily believe, that I did not delay writing to the good Mr. Orme, and Mrs. Waters took charge of my letter; my heart felt as light as a feather. I still continued my walks in the country; one day it seemed to threaten rain, and Mrs. Waters advised me to take a little air in the garden. I did as she desired me, and when I had been there about ten minutes, a young lady that I had observed at my entrance busily writing on the ground with a stick, suddenly left her employment, and advancing towards me with a wild look, exclaimed, are you Louisa Lenox. No, said I, that is not my name. Ah! but it is, said she, shaking her head with an unbelieving air, I am sure you are Louisa Lenox, for she is beautiful, and

happy like you; Augustus Dudly loves her, and therefore she is queen of all the world—but do you know what I mean to do with her—come here, and I will shew you; and she took me forcibly by the hand, I will shew you the grave I have dug for her—I will bury her there, and sit upon her tomb, to watch lest Augustus should steal her from thence. I have been writing to him to tell him so, he will read the letter as he passes by, and then his heart will ache as mine does. Did your heart ever ache, continued she, looking wistfully in my face, oh! no, your cheeks are fat and rosy, not sunk and wan like mine—but I have been a fiend—I ruined that Louisa Lenox, I made her lover think her false—but though he knew I loved him he left me, slighted and refused my love, and to drive me quite to madness, flew from his native land to war

and

and death. I could not refrain from tears, at beholding this sad wreck of human understanding. The poor girl looked at me with a vacant stare—why do you weep? said she, I do not weep, and yet I know he is dead—if you are Louisa Lenox you shall not weep—you never loved Augustus as I did, and shall you lament his death more than I do. I shall soon be with him, continued she, putting her hand to her head, I feel wings growing out of my brain, and on them I shall fly into heaven. She then turned from me, with as much unconcern as if she had never spoken to me, and returned to her writing on the ground. I took advantage of her quitting me, to return to my room, where I questioned Mrs. Waters about her, for I must own she had greatly excited both my compassion, and my curiosity. From Mrs. Waters I learnt, that she

she is the daughter of Sir Francis Dudly, a gentleman of large fortune in Ireland, and that she is cousin to the Augustus Dudly, for whose sake she appears to have lost her senses. The Louisa for whom she took me, is the Miss Lenox that was at Northington Castle, at the time of the masquerade, and who was at that time engaged to Mr. Dudly; he was in Ireland, I remember Miss Evelyn told me, on a visit at his cousins. The match with Miss Lenox has been broken off by some unknown means, and an alliance with Miss Dudly was proposed by Mr. Dudly's mother to her son, who instead of accepting it, entered himself as volunteer in the expedition lately gone to Holland. This young lady it seems, followed her lover to England, where the disappointment of her hopes proved too much for her reason, and she was sent to Doctor Hill's

Hill's by Mrs. Dudly, her aunt, whose life it is said, she attempted, in one of her paroxisms of madness and despair. She had not been long at Doctor Hill's when I saw her; and that was the first day she had been suffered to walk in the garden; her behaviour at first being so furious as to render the strait waistcoat necessary. Mrs. Waters collected these particulars from the servant that accompanied her, and who staid some days at Doctor Hill's, in order to carry a satisfactory account of Miss Dudly to her aunt. This adventure cured me of walking in the garden, though I continually enquired after that unfortunate young lady, who still continues, I believe, in the same melancholy way. Three weeks nearly had elapsed, before I received any answer to my letter from Mr. Orme; at length, when I had almost given up my

hopes,

hopes, he arrived himself at the Doctor's. Oh ! what a joyful meeting was ours, and how delighted was the good man to find me in such excellent health and spirits. I told him, he must thank the good Mrs. Waters, for all the comfort I enjoyed, and above all, for the very meeting that gave us both such pleasure. Mr. Orme brought me a very kind letter from my father, assuring me of his affection and protection, and at the same time entreating me to submit to remain some little time longer in private, as my sister was on the point of marriage, and the bustle my appearance would occasion, might be detrimental to her establishment; that Mr. Orme was fully commissioned to remove me from my present abode, and fix me in the most eligible one he could find, and that he entreated me to make myself happy, and to fear nothing farther from the

malice

malice of the Duchess, as he had taken measures to prevent any thing of that kind happening in future; that he expected my brother's arrival daily, and that when that event, and my sister's marriage had taken place, I should immediately be restored to my rights, presented at Court, and publicly acknowledged as his daughter, and Lord Hartly's sister. I shed tears of joy and gratitude over my dear father's letter, and Mr. Orme congratulated me on this happy change of fortune. He then related to me the ill usage of the Duchess, and his dismission from Northington Castle, and his obstinate refusal of all the favours offered him afterwards by my father; he also informed me, my Lord, of your generous and noble behaviour to him, and expressed his gratitude in the warmest terms. His not being at Northington Castle, to which place

my

my letter was directed, occasioned the long delay I had been lamenting; it had, however, been at last forwarded to him, and immediately on the receipt of it, he waited upon my father, who is now in London on account of my sister's approaching nuptials. My father was highly exasperated at the Duchess's perfidy, but still, for the sake of his family, did not wish to betray a public rupture. He spoke to her grace on the subject, with a proper spirit, and assured her, if any thing like this was attempted again, he should take legal means to make her ashamed of it. The good gentleman then proceeded to settle with Doctor Hill, which was done in a manner quite satisfactory to the Doctor. The next consideration was, whither to remove me, in this Mrs. Waters kindly assisted us with her advice. She recommended

commended her brother's house, the place where I now am; he is only a farmer, said the good woman, but I am sure the young lady will be well, and comfortably taken care of, and my sister-in-law, who is a worthy, motherly woman, will watch her charge with unremitting attention; and she will be there in a retirement impenetrable to impertinent curiosity. Any thing that was wished by Mrs. Waters, seemed desirable to me. Mr. Orme therefore immediately set out with a recommendation from my good nurse to her sister, to make preparations for my reception, and hither I was conveyed, as soon as the good couple were ready for me; and I have been as happy in my retirement as it was possible for one in my circumstances to be; and I sincerely pray heaven, that I may enjoy the same serenity of mind, when I quit this humble vale of innocence for the glittering

glittering scenes of courts and drawing-rooms.

Here ended the narrative of the most charming woman in the world—is there any thing worthy of being written in the same sheet of paper? only one that I know of, and that is, the faithful assurance of the affectionate regard with which,

I am, your's,

ORMOND.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Sir Henry Paget to Lord Ormond.

AAKMAAR, OCTOBER 9.

EXPECT nothing, my dear George, in this letter, that resembles your friend, except the affection of his heart, which no climate can alter—no adventitious circumstances diminish. I now address you from the land of slaughter and devastation—I am surrounded by objects of horror and distress—the wounded, the dying, encompass me on every side. Our troops have fought like Englishmen, but alas! their bodies are not as invincible as their spirits, and as a very

very elegant author says, " the laurel is too closely interwoven with the cypress." I am sure the English newspapers will teem with deaths, I therefore dispatch this to assure you, that your friend Harry is unhurt. I wish I could say the same of one of the most amiable young men I know. You will be surprised when I add the name of, Augustus Dudly. I have not time to explain myself now, but chance has led me to some knowledge of his character, and disposition. I had flattered myself I should have the inexpressible pleasure of reconciling, and uniting the lovliest pair heaven ever formed, each mutually condemning the other for faults of which both are guiltless. I mean Miss Lenox, and Mr. Dudly. Next to the rapture of possessing that bright jewel myself, I should esteem the joy of seeing her the wife of her once loved Augustus—but alas!

alas! I fear it will never be—he is most dangerously wounded in the shoulder with one of those instruments of modern cruelty a barbed bullet—all efforts to extract it, have hitherto proved fruitless; a slow fever attends the wound, and the surgeons entertain but little hopes. Ah Louisa! lovely unfortunate Louisa! what agonizing tortures await thee. Thou wilt find, that thy Dudly was faithful—that when he was denied an interview—when his letters were unanswered—his generous offers refused—his heart beat only for Louisa. But thou, I fear, cannot know it, till the noble youth is laid for ever low, and sighs and tears are all the recompence in thy power to bestow. I am his constant attendant—he suffers with unrepining fortitude the most excruciating tortures. Our brave and august commander has a real regard for him; he witnessed the intrepid

intrepid bravery, the heroic greatness of Mr. Dudly's conduct, in both the arduous engagements we have had, and esteems him accordingly. Should he survive, he will go to England in the first frigate that conveys the wounded—but I fear he will not. Our military affairs, you will know from the gazette. I will not therefore enter on the subject, only to say, that I am pretty sure we shall not remain here long. I am called, as poor Dudly is to undergo another operation, and I think he will not live through it! Farewell,

your's, in haste,

H. P.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

Miss Lenox to Mrs. Mordant.

YOU cannot imagine, my dear Madam, the state of confusion this house is in. Lord Hartly arrived yesterday, and demanded his sister Lady Emily, the instant he was introduced to his father. The Duke assured him that she was safe, in honourable hands, and should be publicly acknowledged, as soon as the nuptials of her sister were over. Lord Hartly insisted upon her appearing immediately; she had suffered too much already, he said, for her sister's sake, it was

time to end her sufferings. He was determined, that the daughter of his lamented mother should no longer be the victim of oppression—the bloom of her youth was wasting in solitude, and oblivion—her restoration to her birthright could not be too public, it would be difficult enough to remove the prejudice of imputed madness—he had no idea of compromising the matter with her oppressors, they could never sufficiently recompense her for what she had undergone. The artifice of passing her for an insane person, had been so profoundly executed, that even he had been duped by it. The veil was now removed from his eyes, he therefore demanded justice for his sister—nor would he ever sleep beneath his father's roof, until that sister was an inmate of the mansion. I happened to be in the drawing-

drawing-room with the Duke, when Lord Hartly was announced; his Lordship would not suffer me to withdraw, as I rose to do, but spoke in the above manner to his father in my presence. How I pitied the poor Duke—all his errors proceeded from a want of energy in his character; his heart is really good, and he doats upon his son; what must he then feel at such a greeting, after an absence of five years? Lord Hartly is an elegant fine figure, with a countenance full of expression, and there is a manly firmness in his manner extremely impressive. The Duke began in his mild manner to expostulate with his son, and to entreat him for the sake of his father's peace to proceed less violently in his sister's cause. Just at that moment the drawing-room door opened, and in came the Duchess. Lord

Hartly saluted her coldly, which was returned with equal *froideur*. His Lordship then repeated his demand, that his sister should be immediately sent for, and offered himself to escort her. Good heavens! what a scene ensued—the Duchess was furious—Lord Hartly severely firm—he reproached her grace with his mother's death—the tyrannic oppression of his injured sister. She retorted with violence—called his mother a maniac—his sister an idiot—in short all that malice could invent, or just recrimination advert to, was uttered in this tremendious dialogue. The weak efforts of the Duke to appease them were unheard, and unattended to. At last, the violence of the Duchess's passions brought on those fits, to which she is subject, and Lord Hartly left the house, vowing never to come again into his father's presence, unless his sister was admitted

admitted with him. It was long before we succeeded in restoring the Duchess to herself, and when we did, she was so weakened by the violence of her exertions, that she was forced to be put to bed, where she has remained ever since, in a very alarming way. Luckily, during the contest between Lord Hartly and her grace, Lord Barford and Lady Caroline were gone out in his Lordship's phaeton, or I know not what might have been the consequence of a meeting between two such high spirits as Lord Hartly and Lord Barford. When Lady Caroline returned in the evening, I had the unpleasant office of relating to her the occurrences of the day. I softened them as much as possible, but poor thing, she was greatly affected, almost to fainting. As soon as she could speak, oh! my brother, my brother, she cried, he hates me as the cause of his beloved sister's

sufferings—alas ! I would sacrifice my life, to atone for the injuries I have unconsciously occasioned. I consoled her as much as possible, and said, I was sure when Lord Hartly became acquainted with the goodness of her heart, he would prize her as she deserved. I then accompanied her to the Duke's dressing-room, where we consulted whether it would be better to inform Lord Barford of the circumstances immediately, or wait till some means had been tried to pacify Lord Hartly, and persuade him to relinquish his violent measures. The latter was determined upon, and Mr. Orme was sent for by the Duke, and appointed mediator between his grace and his son. He has been twice to his Lordship, without obtaining the smallest concession. Lord Hartly insists upon his sister's appearance, before Lady Caroline's marriage takes place.

It

It has therefore been thought adviseable to acquaint Lord Barford with the whole train of circumstances, that have led to this perplexing situation of affairs. To-morrow the marriage articles are to be signed, and then the tale must be told. Lady Caroline's fortune becomes comparatively small, by the acknowledgment of her sister's sanity, as Lady Emily inherits, as eldest daughter, the great Audly estates; therefore nobody can tell how Lord Barford may like this decrease of dower in his intended bride. Should it break of the match, the Duchess will go wild with the disappointment; but I do not think Lady Caroline would be sorry. Good Mr. Orme is gone again this morning, to try once more what can be done with Lord Hartly. Lady Caroline's nuptials were to have taken place next week, but the Duchess's illness, and

the other disagreeable events, now unavoidably postponed them for some time. I am interrupted.

WEDNESDAY EVENING.

It was my good grand-father, Count de Weltzden—he brought me a letter from my mother. She is well, and full of joy at the idea of embracing her daughter. The latter end of the month she hopes to be in London, if she can procure a safe conveyance. The good Count is in extacies, he has bespoke a carriage for me in the most superb style, and taken a convenient house, (No. 30,) in Portman-square, which he is furnishing handsomely, and is all hurry scurry now, to get it complete, that I may receive my mother in it on her arrival. My mother, oh! the

sweet

sweet word—how it fills my heart with joy, and my eyes with tears, a strange contradiction, and yet a natural consequence. We are no better able to bear excess of joy, than sorrow—indeed I have remarked, that the latter is generally borne with more equanimity than the former. As soon as my mother arrives, I am to be presented at court, as Countess de Weltzden; it seems the titles goes to the female, as well as the male line. What a strange reverse of fortune have I experienced in the space of a few short months? are there any more wonders in store for me? Pray, my dear Mrs. Mordant, renew all my pensions for me in your neighbourhood, and that of Lenox Abbey; I can well afford to be useful now, and I fancy that will be the greatest gratification riches can bestow upon me—perhaps the only one—all other pleasures

have lost their gratification, since Augustus Dudly proved himself unworthy my regard. Adieu, my dearest Madam, I will write again in a few days.

Your's,

L. WELTZDEN.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

The same to the same.

THURSDAY NIGHT.

I *MUST* write again, my dear Madam, though I wrote so lately; but the events of this day, or rather evening, have been too interesting to be passed over in silence. I said in my last, that to-day was appointed for the signing of the marriage articles. The Duke and Duchess of Suffolk, and several of the family of both sides, dined here accordingly. Mr. Orme had been as unsuccessful in his last embassy as the preceding ones. He found Lord Hartly was

gone out of town, and not expected to return till this evening. When the ladies withdrew after dinner, the Duke of Northington opened the disagreeable business, and stated the case in a manner as favourable as possible to the Duchess. His grace said, that he had a daughter older than Lady Caroline, who had in her infancy been supposed to be of a melancholy turn, and that having in her riper years unfortunately offended her mother-in-law, the matter had not been investigated as it ought to have been. She had been suffered, through neglect, to remain in obscurity, but feeling himself now thoroughly convinced that her mind was perfectly sane, and that her appearance in public would do honour to the noblest family, he held himself bound to declare his daughter Emily, the real heiress to the Audly estates; and though Lady Caroline's fortune became much

much less by that very declaration, yet he trusted to a man of Lord Barford's possessions, it was a matter of small import, and that the attachment his Lordship professed for Lady Caroline, was proof against a far greater attack. The Duke did not find his harangue received so warmly as he expected. Lord Barford looked offended, but spoke not. The Duke of Suffolk said, be was astonished at what his grace had just advanced, and thought it was a circumstance that ought to have been mentioned at an earlier period—for his part, he had never heard of any other daughter but Lady Caroline, and had therefore considered her ladyship the true heiress to the Audly estates; that his son might have made many matches quite as advantageous as the present, but he preferred Lady Caroline to any other woman—that he could not see why that preference

ference should be pleaded, as an excuse for deceiving him, or depriving him of the fortune he had been taught to expect. It was true, his son's possessions were large, and likely to be greater; but that consideration intitled him, in his opinion, to expect a larger dowry with the lady he married—and he must own, he believed there were few men who would be indifferent, if they possessed the Audly estates or not. I am sure your grace honours me highly, said Lord Barford, with a sneer, by supposing my regard for Lady Caroline would stand the test of fortune, better than Lord Ormond's did. I am indebted to his Lordship's prudence I find, for the great favour now conferred upon me. His Lordship was no doubt better informed respecting the Audly inheritance, when he declined the honour of Lady Caroline's hand. I believe your

Lordship

Lordship is under a mistake, said the Duke of Northington. Lord Ormond never declined my daughter's hand—his Lordship never had the opportunity. I have been grossly mis-informed then, my Lord, replied Lord Barford, and for the future, I shall take care how I trust the evidence of my senses. So saying, he quitted the room, but joined us in the drawing-room, his perturbed manner, and angry countenance, struck us all. His mother asked him if he was unwell. Is it possible to be either unwell, or unhappy, honoured as I am, said Lord Barford, with a sarcastic smile—am I not on the point of being allied to the most honourable family in England? and so sensible am I of my own inferiority, that I really am almost tempted to decline the honour intended me, and resign the possession of this fair hand, taking Lady Caroline's

line's, to some more worthy lover; am I not at least a modest young man? My Lord, said Lady Caroline, rising with dignity, I am wholly at a loss to account for this strange behaviour, but I beg you will not deliberate on the subject—I will save you that trouble; this hand shall never be your's. So saying, she was going to quit the room; but Lord Barford threw himself at her feet, and began to apologize and entreat her pardon, in the most supplicating manner—he attributed his behaviour to a momentary impulse of anger, and entreated Lady Caroline to believe, that she was not implicated in his expressions of resentment—that he adored her, and was ready to receive her without a shilling of fortune, without diminishing the proposed settlements of jointure, &c. &c. In short, he seemed a'most frantic at the thoughts of having offended

her.

her. But Lady Caroline remained inflexible, and told his Lordship, she admired his generosity, as much as his boasted modesty, but never wished to benefit by either; and therefore begged leave to withdraw. At the drawing room door she was met by the Dukes of Northington, and Suffolk, who seeing her offended looks, would not suffer her to pass. Lord Barford explained the cause of Lady Caroline's anger, and reprobated his own folly in having caused it—at the same time entreating the intercession of his father and mother in his behalf. His father blamed him extremely for his rashness, and said, that had he staid longer in the dining parlour he would have been satisfied, as he was, with the generous offers of the Duke of Northington. Every thing conciliatory that could be suggested, was then said to Lady Caroline, by the Duke and

Duchess

Duchess of Suffolk, the Duke of Northington, and in short by all present, except Lord Barford; who finding her ladyship inexorable, walked up and down the room like a mad man, biting his lips, and clinching his hands against his forehead. Lady Caroline drawing me towards her whispered, a fine specimen of gentleness, Lord Barford gives me—what an idea must I form of an indissoluble union with such a man? Just then a violent rap was heard at the street door. We are not at home this evening, said the Duke, looking at Lady Caroline. I have given that order already, Sir, said she; but at the same instant the door flew open, and the servant announced Lady Henry Egerton, Lady Emily Egerton, and Lord Hartly! Good heavens! what consternation prevailed—scarcely could the cold system of politeness, which like the law, has

no

no feeling, establish a sufficient degree of self collection in the party, to give and receive the proper introduction. This, said Lord Hartly, taking Lady Emily's hand, and leading her forward to the wonder-struck circle, is Lady Emily Egerton, the Duke of Northington's eldest daughter, and my twin sister—let her be received as she merits. As soon as the formal salutations were over, Lady Emily broke from her brother, and bathed in tears, and covered with blushes, threw herself at her father's feet. Never did I see such finished grace as she possesses, and there is an imploring tenderness in her fine eyes, that would move an anchorite. The Duke raised her from the ground, and pressing her to his bosom, called her his beloved child, his dear Emily, while his tears fell on her face. When their first emotions were over, Lady Emily turned

to

to the company, and with ineffable grace apologized for the interruption, which her intrusion had caused. Every eye gazed with admiration, but as to Lord Barford, he seemed thunder struck, and quite absorbed in contemplating the divine object before him. Lady Emily certainly is the most perfect beauty in form, and face, I ever beheld. There is an animation in every gesture, which is fascinating beyond description; but the modesty of her demeanor, throws as it were, a fine veil over her beauty, which heightens every attraction—there is nothing of awkward bashfulness about her—it is feminine softness, nicely blended with dignified modesty. The Duke of Northington joined Lady Emily's and Lady Caroline's hands—be henceforth *friends*, as well as *sister's* he said. Lord Hartly came up, and shook his father by the hand, you

make

make me ample amends, my dear father, for all I have suffered by your kind reception of this lovely girl, henceforth we shall all be happy. The conversation having assumed a general congratulatory exchange from her unexpected introduction, apparently inspired the company with but one sentiment, which having at length subsided upon the suggestion of Lady Emily, who had by this time, learnt the particular arrangement that was that day to have taken place—tenderly took her sister, Lady Caroline, by the hand, addressing herself to the Duke, with that peculiar modesty and grace, which so particularly marked her character, commanding at the moment the most fixed attention from all present, asked if from the circumstance of her being the eldest, and now of age, whether she had not the disposal of the Audley estates. You have, my dearest girl,

but

but why do you now so emphatically ask the question? with no other consideration, my dearest father on earth, but that I may be allowed to divide them equally with my sister, and by that means do away every thing that can in the least degree interfere with our friendship. Generous, noble, girl, said her father, clasping her to his bosom, you shall do every thing you like—you are worthy of unlimited power. My dearest Emily, my sweet sister, said Lady Caroline, while tears flowed down her cheeks, never, never, shall it be said, that I was mean enough to take advantage of such generosity. No, no, you have already suffered too much for my sake; if you are still generous enough to forgive, and love me, it is all I can accept—and it shall be the study of my life to deserve that. But my dear father, continued Lady Caroline, addressing

dressing the Duke, permit me to decline Lord Barford's alliance. I cannot, indeed I cannot, marry a man that could so far forget himself, as to insult the woman he pretends to prefer to all others. I own it is too near a conclusion, to break off the match with a good grace—but Lord Barford has given me a specimen of his bad temper, that I neither can, nor will look over. My dear Caroline, replied the Duke, I will never use compulsion—you are the mistress of your destiny. Thank you, dear Sir, thank you, said Lady Caroline, apparently delighted. Then turning to Lord Barford, suffer me my Lord, said she, to thank you for the honour you have done me so far, and at the same time to assure you, that it is impossible we should be ever more to each other, than we are now—I will not marry a man I cannot esteem.

Very

Very well, Madam, replied Lord Barford haughtily, if you are determined to be cruel, I must submit with what fortitude I can summon to my aid. And I will give your Ladyship's tyranny the comfort of knowing, that since I beheld that peerless excellence your sister, the task is become far easier, than I could have thought it ever would be. Take care, Madam, you have now a powerful rival, both in fortune and beauty—for who that has seen Lady Emily, will bestow a second thought upon the haughty Lady Caroline. So saying, Lord Barford bowed to the company, and immediately quitted the room. When he was gone, the Duke and Duchess of Suffolk remonstrated with Lady Caroline, upon her severity to their son, and assured her, that whatever ill-natured things he might say, they were merely the effects of his exquisite sensibility

sibility, and the strong affection he had for her, and entreated her to commission them to settle the difference amicably, and not to blight the hopes they had so long been cherishing, of seeing their son united to an amiable woman. To all these arguments, Lady Caroline answered politely, and thanked them affectionately for the partiality they had shewn her, and begged the continuance of their esteem; but on the subject of the union, Lady Caroline remained inflexible, and they were obliged to take their leave with infinite regret, without obtaining the smallest concession.

Soon after they were gone, Lord Hartly expressed a fear that his sister might suffer from fatigue, having travelled almost the whole day. Lady Henry Egerton had kindly offered Lady Emily, he said, an

asylum in her house, till the Duchess could be brought to receive his sister in a proper manner, and he thought it advisable that Lady Emily should be presented at court, as soon as possible—as at present she was in a kind of non-existence, and Lady Henry was, as nearest relation, the proper person to present her niece. All this the Duke approved, and desired his son to provide every thing proper for his sister, and spare no expence; and in the mean time, he should do his utmost to bring the Duchess to a proper sense, respecting the acknowledgement of his daughter—though he feared this unexpected rupture between Lord Barford and Lady Caroline, would tend greatly to rifle her temper, and render her more violent than ever. Lord Hartly, when he had heard from Lady Caroline, the manner in which Lord Barford had behaved, commended

mended her spirit, and congratulated her on her escape from marrying such a man. He then proposed Lady Emily's taking her leave, and promised to bring her again to-morrow. They all then withdrew, and left only the Duke, Lady Caroline, and poor me, who had really suffered such a succession of agitations during the evening, that I hardly knew what to do with myself. In describing the scenes, I had no time to describe Lady Henry Egerton, or to tell you who she is. Lord Henry who has been dead several years, was younger brother to the Duke of Northington, and this is his widow; she is mother to that sprightly girl, Miss Egerton, who was at Northington Castle, and who I had so often occasion to mention. Lady Henry seems to be of a pleasing, gentle disposition, not the least like her lively daughter—says very little,

and appears to be rather of a pensive turn. It seems, that Lord Hartly having applied to her ladyship in behalf of his sister, she had kindly undertaken the journey to S——, on purpose to fetch Lady Emily to her own house in Cavendish-square. She seemed to treat her neice in an affectionate manner, and the Duke expressed himself much pleased, when she was gone, that Lady Emily was so well situated. There now remained the unpleasant task of informing the Duchess of the events of the day, who being confined to her dressing-room, was ignorant of the whole. The Duke, and Lady Caroline consulted together, which had best convey the intelligence; but neither liking the office, it was agreed they should both go together; and they have been in her grace's apartment,

all

all the time that I have been writing this long account. What will be the result of the conference, heaven knows—but hark, somebody taps at my door, it is Lady Caroline.

Poor dear girl! what a mother she has—the Duchess was perfectly outrageous when she found the match was broken off; she even attempted to strike her daughter, and when she was prevented by the Duke from venting her fury, she had recourse to her old revenge, violent fits. In one of these she broke a blood vessel—two or three physicians have been sent for; poor Lady Caroline is as pale as death—she was obliged to leave the room, the Duchess was so exasperated against her. She is gone weeping to her own apartment, which is very

near her mother's; I shall pass the night with her, for she means to sit up. Adieu, my dear Madam, I will write again to-morrow or next day.

Your's,

L. W.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

The same to the same.

MONDAY NIGHT.

THE Duchess has been so ill for these several days, that my time has been wholly engrossed between comforting poor Lady Caroline, and entertaining Lady Emily, who comes every day. But it has not been thought advisable to inform the Duchess yet, of her arrival, for fear of a relapse. Her grace has been better these two days, and Sir Walter Farquhar advises her going to Bristol, as soon as she can be removed—every preparation is making accordingly, and

if the Duchess continues mending, they will set out in a week. Lady Caroline wishes much that I should accompany them, but I have begged to be excused, as I intend myself the pleasure of spending that time with my beloved Mrs. Mordant, which must elapse before the arrival of my mother in London. The Baron intends meeting her at Harwich, where she is to land, and I flatter myself I shall be able to persuade you, my dear Madam, to accompany me back to town, to witness the meeting between my mother, and her long lost child. I am more and more delighted with Lady Emily, every time I see her ; good heavens! how could the Duke consent to deprive himself of such a treasure, so long? Lord Ormond waited upon the Duke, the day after Lady Emily's arrival, to propose for her Ladyship in form. The Duke, and Lord

Hartly

Hartly both highly approve of the match, and Lady Emily, I can see, does not intend to be very crue' The attachmen between these two amiable beings, commenced five or six years ago in France, as I believe you know. They have both been constant ever since. So long severed by cruel fortune, it is not to be supposed that any delay, but those so unavoidable of the law, will be made in the completion of this union—Happy, thrice happy, pair! be still my throbbing heart, nor attempt to draw comparisons so injurious to my peace! Lord Hartly is continually here, Lord Ormond and his Lordship are very intimate, nothing can be more flatteringly polite, than the attention I receive from both. I am interrupted—the servant says, Lord Ormond wants to speak to me, good heavens! what can he want?

Oh! my dear Madam, what a scene have I gone through. But you will guess, when you read the enclosed letter, and I am sure you will pity the poor Louisa. Alas! how have I been abused, and made to refuse my own happiness—cruel, cruel, Mrs. Dudly! My tears blot my paper, and I can scarcely write—unhappy, dear Augustus! Oh! that I were with you, to close your sad eyes, and ask forgiveness for my seeming cruelty. But tell me, my dear Mrs. Mordant, could I act otherwise—was I not taught to believe that Augustus had forsaken me, as soon as he found I was not heiress to his aunt, and did not that wicked wretch Simson insult me with the basest offer. Alas! that I should not be undeceived till too late! it would now have been a mercy to suffer me to remain in ignorance. Lord Ormond, who is Sir Henry Paget's

most

most intimate friend, received a letter from him above a week ago, relating the circumstance of Mr. Dudly's being dangerously wounded, but his Lordship was not then commissioned to inform me of it. This morning he received another, inclosing the one for me, which I send you—fatal scrawl, every word of it is a dagger to my heart. Lord Ormond said every thing to comfort me, that humanity could suggest; and assured me that if it was possible for human skill to save poor Augustus, he would survive; for the instant he received the first letter, he wrote to Mr. C——, an eminent surgeon, and particular friend of his, who happens to be with the expedition, recommending Mr. Dudly to his most particular care. Dear, amiable, noble Lord Ormond, how I shall ever esteem you! Lady Emily was present during our interview;

how tenderly she wept at the sad tale, and you could see her fond heart exult in the humane attention of her amiable Lord Ormond. Oh! they were made for each other. Farewell, my dear Madam, I shall not write again before I leave town, which will be next Thursday. Pray send Mrs. Parker to meet me at D——, Lady Emily, and Lady Henry Egerton have promised to escort me so far. I long to embrace you, and hear you speak consolation to the sad heart of.

Your's,

L. W.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

Enclosed in the preceeding.

Sir Henry Paget to Miss Weltzden.

WHEN I last had the honour of addressing you, Madam, I thought I was taking my final farewell of all the excellence my soul worshiped. Heaven has ordained it otherwise; in the midst of carnage I have escaped unhurt—that useless being, by whose death the tear of friendship only would have been excited, has survived, while innumerable hearts have bled for the death of fathers, brothers, and husbands! Such are the unsearchable decrees of fate. Affliction

seems

seems the peculiar lot of the good and amiable. Alas! that it should ever be my task to give pain to that bosom, on whose peace my own ultimately depends! yet such is now my mournful duty. I am commissioned by a dying friend, to forward the enclosed billet to your hand.—I fear, lovely Louisa, that you will scarcely find it legible, the cold dew of anguish hung on his brow, while he wrote it, and scarcely could his trembling hand form the letters, as I supported his weak frame in my arms. Oh! Miss Lenox, I too well know what your tender, generous heart will feel, when you are convinced that you have wronged Augustus Dudly. Whatever train of circumstances may have conspired to mislead your judgment, whatever feind like agents may have vilified him in your eyes, you may believe me when I assert, that he is innocent—

that

that he has been ever faithful to you—that notwithstanding your apparent cruelty, his affection is undiminished, and that death alone can tear your image from his heart. Of these truths I am convinced—I was prepared to hate his very name—I had conceived the most contemptible opinion of him, and when I met him first, I could not forbear lamenting that I was to fight under the same banners with such a man. However, the crest of innocence cannot be counterfeited—I soon found my mistake, his intrepid spirit, his generosity, and the humanity that beamed forth, whenever a proper object excited it, gave me a different opinion of his character; there was a sadness that hung about him too, so congenial to my own, that we presently became acquainted—mutual regard soon led to mutual confidence, and I found in my rival, the

sympathizing,

symyathizing, generous friend—I found too, that the most lovely of women had been deceived, that she had thrown away the bright gem of true affection, and wedded wretchedness, when happiness was courting her. How did I then bless that steadiness of principle—that nice sense of honour, that had determined you to refuse the offers I had made. I exulted in what I had before considered my misfortune, for I flattered myself that it would lead to your happiness—I fondly hoped, that I should prove the blest instrument of restoring two faithful lovers to each other's good opinion—and so dear is Miss Lenox's peace to my heart, that I am sure I possess fortitude enough to rejoice, in seeing you united to the only man that can deserve you. But, alas! heaven has forbid the realization of those pleasing

hopes

hopes—a fatal bullet has penetrated his arm, close to the shoulder, and has hitherto defied all surgical power to extract it. Some days ago he underwent a most painful operation ; he bore it with heroic fortitude. I feared he could not have survived it—however, the natural strength of his constitution triumphed over pain—it was as unavailing as those he before underwent. To-morrow, another effort will be tried, which will determine his fate. He expressed an earnest desire to write a farewell to the sole object of his affection. I am unequal, said he, to any explanation—to your friendship Paget, I must be indebted for that—but it will console me in my last moments to think, that my Louisa will read a few lines of mine with complacency. I made my will before I left England, by which

which she will become sole heiress of all I possess, with the exception of my mother's present income, part of which is jointure, part my gift. I fear, added he, sighing, that some of the misfortunes I have to lament originated with my mother—but I forgive every body. Oh! may I obtain forgiveness! may Louisa cherish my memory with the tear of love, and then death will lose its terrors. He grew so faint here, that I feared he would expire—a cordial revived him, and after great efforts, and being obliged to rest several times, he completed the enclosed note. May heaven give you comfort, my lovely Miss Lenox—may the supporting hand of God sustain you in this trying moment—would it were in my power to bid you hope, but alas! I have none myself. If contrary to all probability,

Mr.

Mr. Dudly's wound should take a favourable turn, be assured you shall receive the earliest intelligence of the happy event, from,

Madam,

Your most respectful, and

Devoted humble servant,

H. P.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

Billet enclosed in Sir Henry Paget's Letter.

Mr. Dudly to Miss Lenox.

THE moment approaches my Louisa, in which the sorrows of this tortured heart, the pains of this enfeebled body will find a peaceful termination. My kind friend has undertaken my vindication—noble, generous, Paget! love him, Louisa, for the sake of Augustus. The sweet hope, that you will esteem my memory, is the sole consolation I am now capable of feeling. Oh! could you know the energy with which I still doat upon your very name; an energy that

that defies all bodily weakness, and the attacks of agony itself! but I can write no more. Farewell, best beloved of my heart—Louisa, adored Louisa, farewell. We shall meet again in those regions of joy where distrust can never enter—and where no cruel friends can again divide our affections. If you see my mother, tell her, I forgive her. My faultering hand cannot add no more. Oh! my Louisa, think sometimes upon,

Your,

AUGUSTUS DUDLY.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

Louisa Weltzden to Lady Caroline Egerton.

THANK you, my dear Lady Caroline, for your kind enquiries. We arrived safely at the parsonage, without any interruption after we parted from you. It makes me happy, to hear that the Duchess's health amends, and that you had no cause to repent your indulging me with your company as far as D——. I am not surprised to hear, that you are charmed with Mrs. Mordant; every body loves her that has the happiness of knowing her, and I can assure your ladyship without flattery, that she is not less delighted with Lady Caroline, and Lady

Emily

Emily Egerton. I believe I shall be more indebted to the attractions of the two amiable sisters, than my own persuasions, in procuring Mrs. Mordant's company back with me to London, when I return to meet my long expected parent. I may now say I have two mothers, for Mrs. Mordant has ever been like one to me. My own could not be kinder. How good it was of her to come and meet me, instead of sending Mrs. Parker, as I had desired she would—but it was like herself. You ask how my spirits are; indeed, my dear Caroline, I hardly know how to support them at all, while my mind is racked by this cruel uncertainty. I have every assistance that friendship can give—and I look up to that power, whose kind hand has led me through every eventful period of my life with unremitting care, or I should sink indeed. I

am

am watching the postman's arrival every day, trembling to receive, yet wishing for a letter. Lord Ormond has promised me the earliest intelligence, and Lord Ormond will not deceive me—but alas! what may not that intelligence be? Sir Henry Paget forbids me to hope—and yet I know not how, the sweet deceiver is for ever drawing pictures of felicity—restoring Augustus to health—to long abused affection—and re-uniting us in happiness once more. But alas! these fairy dreams will never be realized, I fear—and it were far better to know the worst, than be thus alive to every torture, hope or fear can inflict. I am called away—Mrs. Mordant wants me—what can it be for—my silly heart flutters at every door that shuts too loudly—I shall grow a child again.

MONDAY

MONDAY.

Pardon me, my dear Lady Caroline, this letter was begun a week ago, but it has never been in my power to add a line since I was called away. When I went down into the parlour, I found Mr. Dobson, the late dear General Lenox's solicitor, sitting with Mrs. Mordant. He arose at my entrance, and bowing respectfully, enquired in the kindest manner after my health. I had not seen him since I lost my amiable friend, and I plainly perceived that it was with difficulty the good man suppressed his tears at saluting me. He was abroad at the time of Mrs. Lenox's death, and has been returned only a few days. Good heavens! what a train of complicated villanies has he detected! but I will for the sake of making myself better

understood, relate every thing in the same order as I heard it myself. After chatting some time upon indifferent subjects, Mr. Dobson turned the conversation upon the great loss we had all sustained, in the death of my beloved mother, as I always called her. My tears bore testimony to my feelings, for I was unable for some time to articulate a word. I was greatly surprised, my dear Miss Louisa, said the good man, when I heard at my return, that you had been cheated out of all the fortune that worthy lady bequeathed you. No Sir, replied I, you are under a mistake, Mrs. Lenox died without a will, I cannot therefore be said to be cheated, though I have not been kindly treated. My dear young lady, said Mr. Dobson, I have advanced nothing more than I can prove. I have a will of Mrs. Lenox's now in my possession, the

counterpart

counterpart of one that was always kept in the cabinet which was in her bed-room, for she herself told me where she had placed it, and in which you are made heiress to all the Lenox estates, excepting seven hundred per annum in Berkshire, that was entailed upon Mr. Augustus Dudly, whom I expected to have found married to one of the worthiest young ladies I know. But I find he has not been quite the thing, no more than the rest—poor young man I hope he is happy now. He is then dead, exclaimed I, and looking in Mrs. Mordant's face, I saw my fears confirmed. I know no more, for I sunk down, and did not recover my senses for a considerable time afterwards, and then I found myself in my bed, my dear Mrs. Mordant on one side, and Mrs. Parker on the other, weeping as if death was the greatest evil that could befal me, though

at that moment it was all my sad heart could wish for. Mrs. Mordant positively refused to say any thing upon the mournful subject that night, but the next morning finding me calm and resigned, she related to me the following particulars. When Mr. Dobson came home, he was surprised to find the face of every thing so changed at Lenox Abbey; for the packet which contained the account of Mrs. Lenox's death had been lost—he therefore knew nothing of the sad event, nor had ever received the enquiries that his partner had sent him, relating to her will. As soon after his arrival, as he could, he waited upon Mrs. Dudly, and informed her of the circumstance of his having a will in his hands; and at the same time expressed his surprise, that she had not found the counterpart, and pointed out the place where he had heard Mrs. Lenox say she kept it.

Instead

Instead of receiving the information with politeness, Mrs. Dudly flew into a violent passion, and told Mr. Dobson his forgeries should avail nothing—it was a fine story to come with now, so many months after her sister's death—a likely thing indeed, that none of his people should know he had a will, when she sent to make the enquiry; and if they did not, there had been ample time to get an answer from the Maderias, if they had written to him on the subject. Mr. Dobson very coolly told her, that Mrs. Lenox had desired him not to trust her will to any body's care, nor to mention to any one that he had such a thing, unless it was asked for; that he had left it locked up in an iron chest, with some other papers of importance; he then mentioned the loss of the packet, as preventing him from receiving the letters written on the subject—and then

asked, when she would appoint a day to hear the will read in the presense of her own solicitor. She replied, with acrimony, never; you seem Mr. Dobson to have your lesson very pat, but I am not a child to be deceived in this manner — you, nor your artful employer, shall find they have a fool to deal with; those who think they have any claim upon the Lenox estates, shall bring those claims into court. I have nothing to say more upon the subject—that beggar's brat Louisa Weltzden, has made mischief enough already in my family, and if she had a spark of honour or honesty, she would think so. Miss Louisa knows nothing of the business yet, Madam; she is at present unacquainted with my return, and has never heard of the will in my possession. Really, said Mrs. Dudly, (her countenance brightening,) if that is true Mr. Dobson,

son- you may find your interest in keeping the matter a secret—it is in my power to serve you greatly—you understand me—meet my lawyer here this evening, and we will talk more upon this business. Mr. Dobson said his indignation rose almost to choke his utterance, but he found there was no way so likely to detect the villany, as to appear to give into their schemes—he therefore promised to meet Mr. Simson at seven o'clock the same evening, and took his leave, after a thousand civil invitations from Mrs. Dudly, to take refreshment, and as many apologies for treating him so hastily at first; but we shall understand each other better for the future, added she, smiling. I do not doubt it, Madam, replied Mr. Dobson, and bowing, left the room, and returned home. He lives a very little way from Lenox Abbey. He was exact to his appointment,

and found the fawning Simson alone in the drawing-room. At his entrance—when the mutual salutations were over—Simson told Mr. Dobson, that Mrs. Dudly had commissioned him to talk to him upon a certain delicate subject. She does not choose to meddle with it herself, but I am to act for her, continued he; it is a very delicate point, very delicate indeed—but Mrs. Dudly is a woman of honour—you understand me, Mr. Dobson. You need not be afraid to trust Mrs. Dudly. No I dare say not, replied Mr. Dobson, but what do you mean, Mr. Simson—I profess I am quite at a loss. Why my dear Sir, said the other, laying his hand upon Dobson's sleeve, why my dear Sir, we must act cautiously in this business; it is, as I said, a very delicate point—you say you have a will of Mrs. Lenox's in your possession—now you know

know this will can only tend to breed confusion, if it is produced—and Mrs. Dudly is a very powerful woman, very rich you know, and allied to some very great families, and connected with all the people of consequence in the neighbourhood. One would not, you know, like to offend such a woman, you understand me now, I dare say. Upon my word, Mr. Simson, I do not—I am very dull of comprehension—how am I to oblige Mrs. Dudly? or how am I likely to offend her? Well, I declare, Mr. Dobson, I did not expect you would be so slow of apprehension—why cannot you see that producing this will would disoblige Mrs. Dudly, who is in possession of, and surely is right heiress to the Lenox estates—and as you say nobody knows of the will but yourself, how easy it is to oblige a person who is both able and willing, to become your

friend, by concealing that abominable instrument of litigation and confusion. But would not that be dishonest, Mr. Simson, said Mr. Dobson, when I was intrusted with the last will and testament of a friend, instead of publishing to conceal it? Oh! by no means, since it would save a world of trouble, and the person who certainly has the best right to the estates would remain in possession. But Mr. Simson, interrupted Mr. Dobson, how are you informed that the will I have in my hands would dislodge the present possessor—it seems as if you had seen something like it—come, I will not treat with you unless we are upon equal terms—what is become of the counterpart of the will I have? while the fate of that is uncertain, do you think I am such a blockhead as to stake my credit by concealing, or destroying the one entrusted to my care—come,

come,

come, my good friend, said Simson, smiling I see you have your wits about you, and there is no deceiving you with impunity, so I will deal candidly with you—the counterpart is safe—that is, it has been served as we wish this to be served—so if you like to make Mrs. Dudly your friend, I am authorised to offer you a thousand pounds by way of donneur, and when you give up the worthless parchment, you shall receive the money. Well, Sir, said Mr. Dobson, holding out his hand, I close with your bargain; I want a little money just now, so it happens lucky enough; as to the will, as you say, it is not worth much to be sure, and as I shall deliver it up into your hands, I am not answerable for what you do with it. No, to be sure not, Mr. Dobson—you argue very justly—you cannot tell what I shall do with it—nobody has any thing to do with that—

when shall I have it? to-morrow morning, Sir. But in the meantime, said Mr. Dobson, I should like to have a promissory note for the money upon certain conditions from Mrs. Dudly. I will return the note when I have the money. This is a mere form Mr. Dobson, and might be dispensed with I think, replied Simson. No, Sir, it cannot be dispensed with, I must have that, or I will not deliver up the parchment. Well, well, replied Simson, I will fetch Mrs. Dudly down, I dare say she will do what you wish. So away he went, and presently returned with Mrs. Dudly, trembling and shaking like an aspen leaf; such poor creatures does conscious guilt make of the poudest of her votaries! Mr. Dobson took a piece of writing paper, and wrote as follows:

I Penelope

I Penelope Dudly promise to pay to John Dobson the sum of one thousand pounds upon receiving from his hands a parchment or paper containing the last will and testament of my deceased sister-in-law Eleanor Lenox—I hereby certify, that the counterpart of the said will is burnt or destroyed and shall never appear in judgment against the said John Dobson

Signed this 10th of Nov. 1802, in the presence of Peter Simson. } Penelope Dudly.

Mrs. Dudly read it first, and then Simson, and they both hesitated about signing it. Lord Bless me Mr. Dobson, you are mighty perticler, said Simson, now I wonder what use this paper is, it is not stampt you know. Well, Sir, just as you like, said Dobson—

sign

sign it or not—you shall have it again I tell you when I receive the money, and you receive the will—can any thing be fairer—if we cannot hurt one another, there's an end of the business. Come, come, said Mrs. Dudly, taking the pen, I will sign—I am in for it too far to retreat; so saying she put her name to the paper, and Simson followed her example, muttering all the while, that Mr. Dobson was very perticler, and that he did not half like the note it was so odd. As soon as Mr. Dobson had got the paper, he put it into his pocket-book, and making a low bow to Mrs. Dudly, assured her she should find she had to deal with an honest man. There was something in his manner, that struck her forcibly, for she turned pale, and in a faultering voice, said, she hoped so, though it was plain enough that was far from her wish. As soon as Mr. Dobson

Dobson got home, he sat down and wrote a letter to Mrs. Dudly, in which he set her conduct forth in its proper light, and asked her what could tempt her to act so basely, since the acquirement of riches furnished but a poor excuse, as she possessed an ample fortune, before it received the addition of Mrs. Lenox's estates. In me, Madam, added he, you find a man far above being bribed by your favours, or intimidated by your displeasure. I shall immediately acquaint Miss Lenox with Mrs. Lenox's bequest in her favour, and be directed by her in my future proceedings. As to the note I possess against you, it will be your own fault if it is made public, as nothing will induce me to expose you, but an obstinate opposition to Miss Lenox's interest. I was obliged to descend to an artifice I despised, to obtain it, but it was necessary to have

some

some document to prove, if necessity required it, the depth and villany of the plot which has been contrived to injure an innocent young lady. He concluded by wishing Mrs. Dudly might soon have a just sense of her own wicked conduct, and make what atonement yet remained in her power. With this letter, my dear Lady Caroline, I shall finish mine, for my paper will hold no more. In my next I shall relate the remainder of this sad story. I shall direct this to London, as I expect a line before you go to Bristol. Farewell,

Your's,

L. WELTZDEN.

LETTER

LETTER XVII.

The same to the same.

I SHALL continue the subject I so abruptly quitted yesterday, my dear Lady Caroline, without farther introduction. The day after Mr. Dobson sent Mrs. Dudly the severe letter I mentioned in my last, he went to dine with a friend about five miles from his own house. The dinner was just placed on the table, and the guests seated round it, when a man on a horse covered with dirt and foam, rung at the gate, and desired to speak immediately with Mr. Dobson, on business of the greatest urgency. When Mr.

Mr. Dobson went out to him, he found one of Mrs. Dudly's servants, who with a terrified look entreated him for God's sake to accompany him that instant, to Lenox Abbey. My lady is dying, Sir, added he, and cannot depart in peace, unless she speaks to you. The humane Mr. Dobson waited not to ask any farther questions, but returning to the parlour, apologised for his abrupt departure, and went immediately to the dying penitent. When he entered the hall, he was met by Mrs. Dudly's woman. Oh! Sir, said she, I am so glad you are come, my poor lady has been raving to see you. How long has your lady been ill Mrs. Ann. Only a few hours, Sir, she was taken this morning soon after breakfast. She has seemed, tis true, disturbed in mind for these two or three days—and would ring for me, and then forget what she wanted. It happened

pened so this morning—she rung for me, and when I came she had no remembrance of what she had done. She breakfasted in her dressing-room, so I went into the next room, and was settling some of my lady's things, who had taken up the newspaper that was just come, and began to read as I left the dressing-room. In about ten minutes I heard such a shriek, and a heavy weight fall to the ground. I ran into the room, and Lord bless me how frightened I was, for there lay poor Mrs. Dudly on the floor, without any sense at all—so I rung the bell, and screamed till I brought plenty of people round me, and we raised her up, and chafed her temples with hartshorn, and at length brought her to herself; but lack-a-day, she raved like a crazy person, kept saying, oh! my son, my dear, dear, son, I shall see him no more—he is dead, he is

dead

dead, and it is I that killed him—and all such stuff as that. By and by Dr. Clarke came, for I sent for him when my lady was first took, and he ordered her to be put to bed, and shook his head, and said she was in a bad way. Well then, she began to call out for you, Sir, and said she must see you, for she could not die in peace till she did; and the Doctor said every thing must be done to calm her, for all her illness lay in her mind, and he feared a bad fever would be the consequence. And so I sent for you, Sir, and hope you will excuse it, and not think much of your trouble. Pray do not mention my trouble, Mrs. Ann, for I do not think of that. I dare say she wants to make her will, Sir, said Mrs. Ann, I sent for Mr. Simson before I sent for you, for I thought mayhap he might do as well, but he is gone into Bedfordshire, and will not be at

home

home again for a week, Sir. I hope you will not let my lady forget me, if so be you do make her will, for I am sure I have served her by night and by day—and though I knew all about Mrs. Lenox's will, and a deal more besides, yet I scorned to mention it to any living creature, and that my lady knows, for I told her myself how I overheard all that past between Mr. Simson and she about the will, and about Miss Louisa too—and very kind she has been ever since to me, to be sure; she durst not be otherwise, for if I was to tell all I know, lack it would make your hair stand an end—but, no, no, I am no blab. I can see, said Mr. Dobson, you are a very trusty person, Mrs. Ann, and I doubt not your lady will reward you as you deserve. But I should be glad to speak to Doctor Clarke; is he in the house? Oh! yes, Sir, he is now with

my

my lady, but I will let him know you are here. Pray do, accordingly this trusty Abigal, left the parlour, and presently returned with Doctor Clarke. Mr. Dobson desired Mrs. Ann would go and prepare her lady to receive him, which she accordingly did. He then enquired of Doctor Clarke the nature of Mrs. Dudly's illness, and whether it was likely to be fatal. If we cannot keep down the fever, answered the worthy gentleman, I fear it will terminate in death; but let us hope for the best, Sir; Mrs. Dudly is naturally of a good constitution; but I am afraid Mr. Dobson, all is not quite right here, pointing to his heart, I have heard her say such things, that I own startled me; but perhaps this is only the beginning of a delirium, we must not judge hardly. She seems very anxious to see you, perhaps you may be able to offer some consolation.

Mr.

Mr. Dobson shook his head, but said he wished it might be in his power. There is great cause for perturbation and distress of mind, said the Doctor, to be sure, for on taking up the newspaper just now, I saw a paragraph that mentions the death of Mr. Dudly, in Holland, in consequence of a wound he received in the disastrous battle of the sixth of last month—Mrs. Dudly doated upon her son—it is no wonder she should lament his loss—but she accuses herself of cruelty, and being the cause of his quitting England—and says, that avarice and ambition have been her ruin—this is all an enigma to me, continued the good Doctor, and I hope is only the effect of a disturbed imagination. Mrs. Ann now came in, and informed Mr. Dobson that her Lady desired to see him—he followed her to Mrs. Dudly's apartment, where he desired her to leave

leave him, as he had business of importance to communicate to her lady—Mrs. Ann very reluctantly withdrew. As soon as she was gone, he advanced to the bedside. Mrs. Dudly gave a faint shriek, and hid her face with her hands. At length she said, oh! Mr. Dobson, I am not able to look in your face, guilty wretch that I am! and now murder is added to my other crimes—I have killed my son, my dear Augustus—had it not been for me, he would have been now in England, possessed of an ample fortune, and happy in the object of his affection—the injured Louisa—but I have been a fiend, and there is no pardon for me. Mr. Dobson entreated her to be calm—and offered all the consolation which religion, and his own good mind could suggest. I never saw my actions in their true light till now, Sir, said Mrs. Dudly. Ambition, and the care of

the

the world, had swallowed up all sense of religion—I neglected my God, and defied his commandments—that wretch Simson too—he was ready to second me in all my wickedness, and even to suggest more than my invention could supply me with. Ah! Sir, had he done as you did, I perhaps should have seen my error before it was too late—but what avails my repentance now—I cannot recall my dear Augustus—my son is sacrificed to my ambition. She then related to Mr. Dobson the artifice she had used, to sever her son and me, which had succeeded but too well, though she found greater difficulty than she expected. The offer of the estate in Buckinghamshire made in that insulting way by that wretch Simson, was intended in the most handsome, and disinterested manner by the amiable Augustus, as a token of respect of his deceased aunt,

and a security for me against a poverty I had not been educated to encounter; and this was done at a time when the generous youth had been made to believe, that I had treated his mother with disrespect, and was faithless to him. Cruel traducers! how it wrings my heart to think what that noble minded young man must have suffered from their base machinations! Mr. Dobson said, his indignation almost got the better of his compassion, and he was frequently on the point of execrating the cruelty of the unhappy object before him, but when he turned his eyes upon her countenance, pity triumphed, and he was silent. Mrs. Dudly said, that my refusal of her son's last offer, and my haughty behaviour on the occasion to the sneaking Simson, who had been instructed by Mrs. Dudly to offer it in a manner that I could not accept it, had confirmed

Mr.

Mr. Dudly in his belief of my perfidy. But instead of having the effect she wished, namely, to determine him to marry his cousin, the anxiety for which alliance had been the chief cause of Mrs. Dudly's dislike to me, it made him take the unexpected resolution of joining the Duke of York's army, then going to Holland—the fatal consequences of that resolution are my punishment—my heart is oppressed by sorrow, and torn by remorse—had I been virtuous, I should have been happy—the crooked path of guilt has led me to the vale of misery—and hope is fled for ever! but Mr. Dobson, I charge you to call that Simson to account—he has seven thousand pounds of my money now in his hands, and I can bring him to no reckoning. Alas! I am going to a long one myself. Oh! that I could see Louisa—that I could hear her

say, she forgave me, but it is impossible—when she knows what I have done—it is not in human nature to pardon such injuries. Excuse me, Madam, replied Mr. Dobson, I am not of your opinion, I really think Miss Lenox is capable of that exertion—deep and irreparable as the injury is—christianity has put no bounds to the divine act of forgiveness, and Miss Lenox is a true Christian. Do you really think she could forgive me? I should then have some hopes of heaven. My repentance, though unavailing, is deep and sincere—pray good Mr. Dobson, write to Miss Lenox—entreat her to come to me—tell her I will make her all the poor recompence now in my power—she shall inherit my fortune, added to that of my brother—but alas! what is fortune—all that could have rendered it welcome to her is lost—for ever lost! The poor woman

man felt such agony, that Mr. Dobson, thought it would terminate her existence. As soon as she grew a little calmer, he told her that he would go in search of me himself, if that would satisfy her, and that he did not make a doubt of my attending her immediately. Ah! what an opinion you have of her, cried she—but she deserves it—she ever was a good girl, and I should have really loved her, had not fatal avarice and pride stood in my way—but do good Mr. Dobson, do try what you can do for me; but before I part with you, I must beg you will make my will—I will not leave that to uncertainty—let me make what atonement I can. Well, well, Madam, said Mr. Dobson, we will do it bye and bye, you have exerted yourself too much already—try and compose yourself a little, and in a couple of hours time I will wait upon you again, and

free your mind from all worldly cares, and heaven grant you the peace you stand in need of. Thank you, good Mr, Dobson, thank you, replied Mrs. Dudly, the blessing of so good a man will not be lost—pray for me, my good Sir—pray that my repentance may be accepted. Mr. Dobson then left the room, and went to prepare for the important task of making Mrs. Dudly's will, but alas! poor lady, she presently fell into strong convulsions, and when she recovered from them was quite delirious. Mr. Dobson finding there was no chance of her being in a state for the performance of this serious duty, would lose no time, but after taking a slight repast, set out in search of me. He luckily came to Mrs. Mordant's to make his first enquiry. I related in a former letter how deeply the sudden news of poor Augustus's death affected me. Mrs. Mordant finding

me

me so unfit for travelling would not tell me the perport of Mr. Dobson's visit, till the next day, when being convinced that the journey would be attended with no danger to me, she informed me of all that I have now related; and kindly offered to accompany me to Lenox Abbey. Mr. Dobson had set out on his return thither the evening before, soon after I was put to bed. A chaise was ordered, and we began our journey immediately, and arrived the same evening very late, at Lenox Abbey. Our first intelligence was, that Mrs. Dudly was much worse. She had just had a lucid interval, in which time she insisted upon her will being made—the exertion had been too much for her, and a violent return, first of convulsions, and then of delirium, had been the consequences. The good Mr. Dobson had tears in his eyes—he took my hand—

my dear Miss Louisa will not hesitate I am sure, to pardon poor Mrs. Dudly—she is a true penitent, the anguish of her mind will absolutely cause her dissolution—how great then must be that agony! I will not only forgive Mrs. Dudly myself, replied I, but I will bear to her the consolation of her son's forgiveness—he commissioned me to do so in a letter he wrote to me since he received the fatal wound. Fatigued as I was I would not go to bed that night, least in an interval of reason Mrs. Dudly might ask for me, and she might relapse before it would be possible to call me from my bed. I applauded myself for the resolution afterwards—for about midnight the poor lady called for Mr. Dobson, and when he came to her bedside. Ah! my good Sir, said she, you have deceived me—Louisa will not come, her resentment is but too well

founded—it was too much to ask for. Make yourself easy, Madam, said Mr. Dobson, Miss Louisa is come, she is now in the house, I will call her to you directly. Oh! what an angel she is, cried poor Mrs. Dudly, but do not call her, no doubt she is gone to bed, and wants refreshment. No, Madam, said Mr. Dobson, Miss Louisa refused to go to bed until she had seen you. Sweet creature, said Mrs. Dudly, and this is the girl I persecuted! Oh! if she can forgive me, I cannot forgive myself. Mr. Dobson then came to tell me Mrs. Dudly wished to see me, and I flew to her bedside. Heavens, what an affecting sight presented itself before me—no longer the fine blooming countenance that seemed to set the ravages of time at defiance, and appeared more beautiful at fifty, than many women of twenty-five—her fine eyes were sunk and dead—

her cheeks hollow and wan—her pale lips, and the trembling hand that was held out to me, had the cold damp of death upon it. I was too much affected to speak—my tears spoke for me. Mrs. Dudly said, dear kind Louisa—you forgive me then—I see you do—heaven will recompence your goodness, doubt it not my child—God distributes his blessings to the good and virtuous—they may appear to the narrow sight of mortals to be oppressed, while vice rides triumphant, but they can never suffer what the wicked do—the heaven they carry in their own bosoms, no earthly power can deprive them of. Thus, my Louisa, peace has smiled upon you, while the tortures of the accursed have been mine—never have I tasted happiness since I departed from the path of rectitude—weep not for me, my child, if God will

pardon

pardon my sins, death is far more desirable than life—consider what I have done—never could I look up again if I was to recover. Dare I lift my guilty eye to the awful face of innocence and virtue, ah! no, the torturing recollection of my own wickedness would sink me into nothing. I entreated her to take comfort, and begged her to recollect, that there was no sin that might not be washed out by repentance—that I was sure her's was sincere, and therefore it was accepted by heaven—I assured her that she not only had my forgiveness, but my most ardent prayers for her recovery and future happiness. She called me sweet girl, and kissed my hand—you give me a foretaste of heaven—yes, my sad heart feels the reviving ray of hope—God will forgive his wretched creatures—he will not be less merciful than you are—but oh! my son—

my poor Augustus—he perhaps cursed his unhappy mother in the hour of death. No, Madam, interrupted I, your son thought not of cursing—his gentle soul breathed nothing but mild forgiveness—he wrote to me when his life was despaired of, and his last request was, that I should tell you he forgave you. Blessed sound, cried Mrs. Dudly, then Augustus forgave me—Oh! unhoped for blessing! I have nothing now to do, but to make my peace with God—join your prayers with mine, my friends, cried she, looking round the bed—then clasping her hands together, she seemed absorbed in mental prayer. An awful silence prevailed for near a quarter of an hour. She then entreated that the clergyman might be sent for, and that she might receive the sacrament. Doctor Clarke expressed a fear that it might be too much for her just then.

Oh!

Oh! no, she replied, I have but little time, let me not waste that little. Her request was complied with, and Mr. Dobson, the good Doctor, and myself, partook of the solemn feast. As soon as it was over Mrs. Dudly said, thank God for his great goodness in permitting this—now let me lay composed a little. We all retired from the bed to the other end of the room, except Doctor Clarke, who kept his seat by the bedside. A dead silence ensued, you might have heard the falling of a pin. I hoped Mrs. Dudly had fallen asleep—it was so in fact—but it was the sleep of death. Dr. Clarke gave us a sign that all was over. It was near six o'clock in the morning before I got to bed, and I really was so overcome with fatigue, that I slept till near twelve at noon. As soon as we had breakfasted, the will was read by Mr. Dobson—wherein I was made

sole

sole heiress and executrix, in case Mr. Dudly's death was proved to have taken place—but if he was found to be still living, which heaven grant he may, all Mrs. Dudly's personal property, which is immense, was to be equally divided between us, and the estates to go to Augustus—this, with a few legacies to friends and servants, was the whole of the will. The Lenox estates were not mentioned, as Mr. Dobson has sufficient proof of my title to them. See, my dear Lady Caroline, how riches crowd upon me, when the power of enjoying them is for ever snatched away—but let me not despise them, since they may prove the means of dispensing happiness to others. I cannot help flattering myself at times, that the newspaper intelligence which has proved so fatal to Mrs. Dudly, is unfounded I have not yet heard it confirmed by Lord Ormond,

Ormond, and hope still revels in me. I returned to the priory yesterday, having left Mr. Dobson full power to act for me till Mr. Dudly's death is either confirmed, or contradicted. Poor Mrs. Dudly is to be interred to-morrow. As soon as may be thought proper after the funeral, Mr. Dobson will call Simson to an account he little dreams of. I am afraid, my dear Lady Caroline, will be tired of reading this tedious melancholy detail—but perhaps the kind interest she takes in my concerns will do away some part of its tediousness. Your letter is this instant given me. You are then set out for Bristol. May its waters restore the Duchess to health, and your anxious heart to happiness—if it is in my power, you may depend upon my visiting you there. I wish I could dispel your melancholy,

lancholy, but, alas! my communications have nothing of *l'allegro*—however they will suspend your own sorrows, by leading you to contemplate the distresses of others, and pity always exalts the mind—the comparison we naturally draw between ourselves and others, strengthens our fortitude. May angels watch my amiable friend, and may she always love her affectionate,

L. WELTZDEN.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

Lady Emily Egerton to Louisa.

MY DEAR LOUISA,

I HAVE a double claim upon your indulgence for troubling you so soon with a letter. Your own permission, and Lord Ormond's particular request—you know his Lordship will soon have a right to command, though I do not believe he will ever avail himself of the privilege—he will find his inclination so much my law, that he will have no occasion—but this is not what I have most important to say—I am the herald of good news, and therefore sure of

of a kind reception; let my style be ever so incorrect, my letter cannot be insipid. Joy to my dear Louisa, I have the pleasure of announcing the unexpected tidings, that Mr. Dudly is out of danger—nay *en pleine* convalesence. The operation of extracting the ball was performed by the surgeon Lord Ormond wrote to, with the greatest success; and he will very shortly be in a state to bear a removal without pain or danger. This pleasing intelligence was conveyed in a letter from Sir Henry Paget to Lord Ormond. Lord Ormond entreated me not to lose a moment, in forwarding the welcome news to the amiable Miss Weltzden—his anxiety has been forcibly awakened on your account, having lately read an erroneous statement of Mr. Dudly's death in the papers. The mistake it appears originated in a gentleman

of

of the same name, but of a different family, having fallen in the same engagement, where his namesake received the desperate wound, which had so nearly proved fatal. Lord Ormond desires me to say, that he sincerely sympathizes in your present happiness, which he flatters himself will soon be increased by a happy reconciliation. I will now tell you a little of the chitchat that relates to our family—would you believe it, Lord Barford has been so ridiculous as to make proposals for me to my father—he pretended to be vastly struck with my beauty, and says that my sister not only usurped the estates that justly belonged to me, but the hearts that were destined by fate to adore me. Did you ever hear any thing so fulsome? Ah! the estates are the objects of his adoration, and had they fallen to the lot of an Ethiopian, he would have sworn she was "passing fair,"

fair," if his flattery could have won her to give him a share in them—what an escape has our dear Caroline had—a thousand times has she thanked me with tears, for being the happy instrument of breaking off a match her heart revolted at—for she confesses she never loved Lord Barford. What motive then, my dear Louisa, could induce her to accept him as a lover? When I ask her that question, she sighs, blushes, and gives me no answer. I own it puzzles me when I think upon it. I parted with great reluctance from my new sister—my sweet amiable friend—what a noble minded creature she is—surely she cannot be the Duchess's daughter, for there is not the smallest resemblance between them—of mind I mean, for their persons are certainly alike—only that Caroline's eyes are far softer than her mother's ever were, and the tone of her voice

sweeter.

sweeter. It has been agreed upon, *nem con* by those who have a right to dispose of my destiny, that I am to be united to Lord Ormond, as soon as the marriage settlements can be finished, you will call me a perverse creature, when I say, that I wish my nuptials could be deferred a little—but do not scold me, I can give very good reasons for my perversness. In the first place, I should like to have either my sister, or you, or Mrs. Travers, with me at that important period—neither of whom can indulge me with their company, if this hurrying scheme is put in force. And in the next place, I have a thousand little nonsensical qualms and repugnances, that I never thought of before, to conquer and remove, before I can marry with a good grace—but however make yourself easy—none of my obejections have any weight, and next Thursday, in spite of

all

all my entreaties for farther delay, is fixed upon for the yielding up of my so lately acquired liberty. As soon as the ceremony is over we are to set out for Lord Ormond's seat, in ——shire, which is close to my beloved Mrs. Travers's abode. After spending a few weeks there, I have promised to meet my sister at Bristol, and in our road thither intend calling upon my late worthy host, Mr. Waters, whose benevolent attention to me in my misfortune can never be forgotten, nor the remembrance of his worthy dame and their innocent daughter Lucy. My aunt Lady Henry Egerton is extremely kind to me, and I find the society of her sprightly daughter of infinite service in keeping up my spirits. She often laughs at the recollection of the white nun at the masquerade, and the mischief she had nearly occasioned by her ill-timed raillery to my dear

Mrs.

Mrs. Travers, then Miss Evelyn. I know you will be glad to hear that I have passed the fiery ordeal of a first presentation, with tolerable composure. The reception I met with from our gracious sovereign, and his amiable consort, was most flattering and pleasing. His majesty regarded me several times, with tears glistening in his eyes. Lady Henry Egerton, who presented me, told me afterwards, that the King seemed perfectly well acquainted with my story, and said, with a smile to her, I see that sweet girl will take ample revenge for having been so long deprived of her liberty. She has beauty enough to endanger the freedom of all who behold her. There was a compliment—you cannot think how proud I am of it—but indeed I am very moderate in my plans of revenge, I wish only for one captive—it is true, indeed, that I never intend to enfranchise

franchise that one; but as I mean to bind myself with the same chain, he will not have much cause to grumble. But my dear Louisa, while I am giddily chatting upon subjects your own goodness alone can make interesting to you, I am detaining information of the utmost consequence to your felicity. Can you forgive me? but I know you can, and therefore wave all farther apology for the faults of,

Your affectionate and obliged,

EMILY EGERTON.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

Louisa to Lady Emily Egerton.

I DELAY not a moment in thanking my charming friend, for her thrice welcome letter. Ah! my dear Lady Emily, what heartfelt joy have you bestowed upon me—he lives! my Augustus lives! I may again hope to behold him—to behold him free from all the prejudice that has so long, and so cruelly, severed us; I have now an ample fortune to bestow upon him, without being indebted to the partiality of his aunt, or the repentance of his mother. She, alas! has fallen a victim to her own re-

morse, awakened by the erroneous statement of her son's death—this will cast a damp upon our felicity; for however faulty poor Mrs. Dudly was, she was still the mother of Augustus: the cause and manner of her death, must fill his affectionate heart with sorrow—heaven grant that he may not be informed of it, until his health is sufficiently restored to enable him to support the shock with firmness. And now my dear Lady Emily, accept my warmest wishes for your felicity—may every good omen smile upon the nuptials of the most amiable pair I know—ye were formed for each other—long, long may you enjoy the felicity you so richly merit. I have promised Lady Caroline to visit her at Bristol. I hope I shall be so fortunate as to meet you there. I must be in London the beginning of January, as my dear mother is expected

early

early in that month—heaven bless my two amiable friends! Remember me kindly to Lord Ormond, and tell his Lordship, that my gratitude keeps pace with his goodness. Adieu, my dear Lady Emily, Mrs. Mordant joins her best wishes with mine for your felicity, and I am, with great truth,

Your obliged and faithful,

L. W.

LETTER XX.

Lord Ormond to Sir Henry Paget.

GIVE me joy, my dear Paget—this day has made me the happiest of men—this day has given my long adored Emily to my wishes—she is mine—her lovely lips have just now pronounced the sacred vow, that makes her mine for ever. The venerable Orme performed the ceremony—the carriage waits that is to convey us to Beaumont Park. If ever you are married Harry, to the object of your tenderest affections—you will feel the value of the favour I am now bestowing upon you, by stealing five minutes from the society of my beloved, to make

make my friend partaker of my felicity. I shall write again soon. When do you return from the continent? I am impatient to see you, and your new friend—the lovely Louisa is well and happy,

Your's,

ORMOND.

LETTER XXI.

The same to the same.

BEAUMONT PARK.

I PROMISED to write to you again very soon, my dear Harry, in my last incoherent attempt at a letter; I hasten to perform my promise, to apologize for the hasty scrap I sent you—but I know little excuse is necessary with you—your generous heart ever makes allowance for the situation of your friends, and is even ready to grant more indulgence than they could themselves request. The gentle Emily sweetly chides me for not presenting her regards, when she knew to whom

whom I had been writing, and smiling, added, I have so very lately acquired the name of wife, that I suppose you did not think me quite entitled to the privileges of one. Let me not be again guilty of the like omission, but entreat my dear Paget to accept the best wishes of Lady Ormond, for the esteemed friend of her happy, thrice happy husband. We are here as blest as the first pair in paradise, and scarcely feel that dreary winter reigns around us. Our worthy friend Travers, and his amiable wife, frequently visit us, and seem almost as happy as ourselves. My dear Emily's second father, the venerable Orme, has followed us down, and means to continue at Beaumont Park for the remainder of his life; the Duchess's ill treatment of him having rendered Northington Castle disagreeable to him—besides, as he says—what sight can he have so delightful,

as that of his beloved child reposing on the lap of felicity—he that had so long with fearful eye watched her sad progress through the vale of sorrow—here, here, cried the good man, clasping his hands together, let me close my eyes in peace—for I have now seen all that my heart panted to behold—Oh! suffer me not, merciful God, to witness a change, but let me die rejoicing in thy goodness! We were both deeply affected at the good old man's ejaculation, and I saw the crystal drops fall from my Emily's eyes, as she affectionately kissed her venerable friend's hand. Well may he doat upon her, for she is indeed an angel. I must repeat part of a conversation that passed between Emily and myself last night. There must be no disguise between us, my dear Lord Ormond, said the dear girl, looking at me, with a sweet earnestness. Our confidence must

must be mutual and unlimited—I do not know, added she, with an arch smile, whether I shall be quite so strict with you, as with myself—perhaps it might not be quite fair—but for my own part, I shall not be happy unless you read my heart as through a glass. Have patience, and I will satisfy you, yesterday I received a very kind letter from my father — taking one from her pocket book, and giving it into my hand; you will there see that my indulgent parent tells me, he has placed five thousand pounds in his banker's hands for my use, to purchase any little trifle that I might wish for, without your knowledge. It is generous and kind beyond description of my dear father, and I feel the warmest gratitude for his goodness; but he does not know his daughter, if he thinks she could taste a

pleasure that had not her husband's sanction and entire approbation. The first use then, I make of my father's bounty is to offer it to you my Lord; if there is any little derangement in your finances, that would make that sum acceptable to you just now, take it I beseech you, and rest satisfied that when I purchase your pleasure, I ensure my own. My love, exclaimed I, pressing her to my bosom—what an angel has heaven bestowed upon me—words cannot do justice to the admiration, the love I feel for you—the qualities of your mind so far exceed the charms of your person, that all lovely as you are, it is scarce possible to remember you are handsome—but my sweet girl must keep her father's present—I have no need of it my love—but if you want five thousand more, I will give it you without asking what you design to do with it—so unbounded is

my

my confidence in your prudence. What then, you will not have my present? No, my love, I do not want it—do with it whatever you like—lay it out in jewels if you please. If then you will not accept the money, you must listen to the plan I have formed for the disposal of it, and approve or condemn as your judgment, not your partiality directs. In the first place, I should like to present one thousand pounds to my dear Mr. Orme. I know that for his own use, the worthy man will think what you have so generously settled upon him, more than sufficient—but he has a niece who is not comfortably married, and for her this gift is designed, to be laid out by her uncle in some way that will secure it to herself, by way of provision, if her husband quite forsakes her, which he has often threatened to do. I know it will comfort my venera-

ble friend's heart, and will be a more delicate compliment than offering it to himself; but pecuniary presents can never lessen the obligations I am under to him—do you approve of it my Lord? I do my Emily, and so highly, that I shall beg to add my mite, and by doubling the sum render the situation of the good Mr. Orme's niece still more independent. I am glad you are so much of my way of thinking; thus encouraged I shall proceed with greater confidence. One thousand pounds more I design to present to my dear Mrs. Travers, so long the companion and kind softener of my captivity. Five hundred pounds I intend to be laid out in purchasing an annuity for the worthy Mrs. Waters, the kind nurse to whose tenderness and care I owe the preservation of my senses, and my ultimate restoration to liberty. Two hundred pounds

I mean

I mean to give the good natured Lucy Waters, daughter to the worthy farmer, whose hospitable roof received me, when I was a fugitive from my confinement; and one hundred I would wish to lay out for the good man's use, as a token of my esteem—and twenty pounds to be given among his servants; and thirty pounds more to be distributed by him to the most worthy objects of charity in his neighbourhood. One hundred pounds more I wish to give Doctor Hill, for the kindness he shewed me in permitting me to quit his house, as soon as he found my intellects were not deranged. Another hundred I would give to the remains of the kind sisterhood with whom I passed two years at Avignon, and who are now fugitives in England, and I fear their situation at present, is such, as will render this little token of my regard but too welcome.

come. T'e remainder I intend pu'ting out to interest in some way that you, or good Mr. Orme shall direct, to serve as a fund for charitable purposes. This, my dear Lord, is the whole of my plan—now tell me, without flattery, has it your approbation? My dear Emily, said I, it is impossible for me to tell you how much I admire the goodness of your heart and the soundness of your judgment. Your plan is worthy of the head that formed it, the heart that suggested it. Tell me, Paget, is she not an angel? I could dwell for ever on her eulogium; but perhaps the theme may be tedious to an old batchelor. I dare say you have smiled more than once, at the effusions of the honey moon—but believe me, my admiration is built upon too solid a foundation to yield to novelty—the immoveable rock of esteem is the basis of my love.

I am

I am expecting a letter from you with the utmost impatience—your arrival in health and safety, will complete my felicity. Lady Ormond corresponds regularly with the charming Louisa, who is well, and no doubt impatient for the return of her lover—by the bye, I must own, that I think Mr. Dudly in some degree to blame, for not more strictly investigating the matter before he gave up his mistress to oblivion, and himself to despair. But men are such impatient creatures, that they are easily made the dupes of the shallowest plots. Has your friend heard of the death of his mother—poor woman, she fell a victim to her own artifices—" she digged a pit and fell into the midst of it herself." However, I forgive her, as the evil is not without remedy, and she has paid the forfeit of wickedness, she was a sincere penitent, and left her fortune

to

to the injured Louisa, supposing her son to be dead. The Duchess of Northington is at Bristol, for her health. Lady Caroline is with her, and I suppose by this time Louisa has joined them. We intend making them a visit as soon as we receive notice that the Duchess is able to bear the news of our nuptials. What an unconquerable spirit is her's! her life is less dear to her than her revenge. My father will be with us in a few days; he doats upon my Emily, and she is not less attached to him—but to love my father requires only the advantage of knowing him. Long as this letter is, I must add a few words more, to relate a bit of scandal that has just reached me, I received a letter from Mountague yesterday, in which he informs me, that Jack Spencer is likely to pay dearly for being so irresistably handsome. He went from Fancourt to Bath,

and

and there the fates ordained he should meet with your quondam dulcinea, Lady Elizabeth Melmouth, who weary of the dull round of conjugal endearments, had flown to the gay world, to receive that admiration and flattery, she considers the just reward of her superlative beauty, and indispensable to her happiness. Melmouth was careless of his treasure, and insensible to the thousand calls of affected insipidity, and childish impertinence, that characterise his goddess. No incense, no oblations graced her altars, till the devout Jack Spencer stept forth, and worshiped the lovely idol—never were two people more alike. What wonder then, that they should mutually admire the reflection of each other's image—the amour was soon talked of—the whisper reached Melmouth's ear, who though he did not choose to prevent, nevertheless resented the injury

injury done his honour—and it is thought Doctor's Commons can only settle the affair—to a thinking mind these circumstances, however trivial and jocular they may be treated by some, too plainly mark the depravity of the age and of its manners; when it is considered how frequently these cases occur, and that all look to their superiors for examples; how serious must be their effect; every new circumstance strikes with a reiterated force at the foundation of all society, the higher the rank the more forcible the shock. The great cause of this modern fashionable evil, I conceive arises from the preference, that either sex gives to superficial and momentless accomplishments, to the solid virtues, which can only form the basis of conjugal felicity.

Believe me, dear Paget, ever your's,

ORMOND.

LETTER XXII.

Louisa, to Lady Caroline Egerton.

MY DEAR LADY CAROLINE,

THOUGH I intend very shortly to be with you, yet I must write you the account of a catastrophe that has made a deep impression on my mind, and as it is of a melancholy kind, I wish to dismiss it in a letter, before I see you, that nothing gloomy may cloud the pleasure of our meeting. You remember what I wrote you about that wicked Simson, and the reason I had for supposing he had acted very basely towards me,

me, in more respects than one. Alas! the unhappy man was even worse than I suspected. Mr. Dobson sent for the worthy Parker, to explain some affairs relative to her late Lady's effects. Mr. Dobson had called Simson to a very strict account, and several meetings had taken place between them, in order to settle the business finally, and take it out of Simson's, and place it in Mr. Dobson's hands. Nothing satisfactory had yet been done—some large sums were still unaccounted for—Simson had evaded as long as he could, the scrutiny he feared; but Mr. Dobson insisted on a day being fixed; the proper people were appointed to meet. The day preceding this important one, Mrs. Parker was in the room where Mrs. Lenox used to sleep, shewing some secret drawers in a cabinet, with which Mr. Dobson was unacquainted—when Mr. Simson

son unexpectedly entered the apartment: he turned pale on seeing Mrs. Parker, and hesitatingly told Mr. Dobson, that he had enquired for him below, and had been directed by the servants thither. That is rather strange, replied Mr. Dobson, dryly, as I believe none of the servants knew where I was. Simson looked confounded, and Mrs. Parker said, this is not the first time Mr. Simson has been in this chamber. I remember when my poor Lady lay dead upon that bed, I stood unperceived behind the curtain, and saw Mrs. Dudly, and Mr. Simson very busy at this cabinet. I dare say you have not forgot Sir, turning to him, the paper, or parchment you burnt, I am sure I never shall, for I believed, and always shall believe, it was my lady's will. The wretched man was thunderstruck, and clapping his hand upon his forehead,

head, exclaimed, there is a combination against me, I see it plainly—but to-morrow Mr. Dobson every thing shall be settled, finally settled—what I came to say now is of no consequence, so good morning to you, and he hastily withdrew. The remainder of the day, and the ensuing night he shut himself up in his room burning papers, and writings, and in the morning, when the servant went to call him to breakfast, he asked what o'clock it was, they told him nine—in an hour you may come again, and then every thing will be finished. The servant supposing he meant the business that had engaged him so deeply, went down stairs unconcerned, and told his mistress that his master would not be ready for breakfast for an hour. As he often was detained from his meals by business, this answer excited no alarm, and they had not the smallest idea of his

his intention, till the report of a pistol awakened them from their error, and when they burst into his apartment, the wretched man was found extended lifeless on the floor—what a sight for a wife and a daughter to behold! the poor terrified women sunk down beside the mutilated body—the servant fetched a surgeon, but he was beyond the reach of art—the ball had penetrated his brain, and instant death had ensued. The widow and unfortunate daughter have been extremely ill ever since, and it is feared that Mrs. Simson will never recover the shock. Upon an investigation of the affairs it appears, that the unhappy man has embezzled above seven thousand pounds of Mrs. Dudly's property, not a shilling of which it is supposed will ever be recovered. Notwithstanding this, I have written to Mr. Dobson, and desired him to wait upon Mrs. Simson

Simson, and assure her that no severe methods shall be taken to recover this money, but that it shall be my study to separate the innocent from the odium unavoidably thrown upon the guilty. That I could take upon me to promise this for my own part in the business, and that I did not entertain a doubt of finding correspondent sentiments in Mr. Dudly at his return. I thought this but just to the poor sufferers, whose hearts are almost broken by the obliquy into which the nefarious practices of Simson has plunged them. Mrs. Mordant will accompany me next week in my journey to Bristol, and promises herself great pleasure in cultivating the acquaintance of the amiable young lady who made so agreeable an impression on her fancy at first sight. I am glad to hear you have got so pleasant a house, and at an easy distance from the wells—and I assure you

I long

I long to become an inmate of it, for I have ten thousand things to say, which it is impossible to write. You will be surprised at the magnificent style in which I shall visit you. I received last week a travelling chariot built in the first style of fashion, with the Count de Weltzden's arms emblazoned on it, and an affectionate letter from my grandfather, who takes great pleasure in the idea of my appearing at your house in the rank to which I am entitled, he says, by birth and fortune, though he flatteringly adds, my worth is still my best distinction. I am sure I can answer that his affection is far more precious in my eyes, than any other advantage that results from our relationship. I shall not write again till I see you—I had a charming letter from Lady Ormond yesterday, but no news

yet of Augustus's return; is it not strange? A shadow alarms me now—if he should relapse—but I grow gloomy, I will have done, and only add that,

I am, dear Lady Caroline, your's,

L. W.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

Sir Henry Paget to Lord Ormond.

MY DEAR ORMOND,

MOTWELLS.

I WILL positively never deal again in surprises. I am not lucky at them—here have I been doing mischief by wholesale, and painting the happiness of my friends in a manner that would do honour to Marplot himself. Thank heaven, no fatal effects will ensue—that danger is past, to my inexpressible joy, for I really thought my intended comedy would have become a downright tragedy—and that I should have had

the honour of pronouncing the concluding speech, after the dead bodies were removed, and to have finished with a grace, I must have made my own quietus with a bare bodkin, or any other weapon more handy. But I am unintelligible, and that there may be a good understanding between us, I will explain myself. Augustus Dudly and myself, arrived in town last Saturday, and from thence proceeded to Lenox Abbey—having previously prepared my friend, by acquainting him with the circumstances of his mother's death, to expect the mournful scene we were to encounter. He bore the intelligence with more fortitude than I expected, for his health is by no means perfectly established. Augustus is not like most of the young men of the day, to whom the acquisition of an ample fortune is consolation enough to reconcile any friend's demise;

demise ; and notwithstanding the undeserved cruelty of his mother's behaviour, he still loved her tenderly. The pleasing recollection that Lenox Abbey was no more than ten miles distant from the priory, where he fondly hoped to meet his adored Louisa, supported him with a degree of fortitude bordering on chearfulness. This pleasing expectation was however done away on our arrival there, where we met Mrs. Dudly's solicitor, a Mr. Dobson, who informed us that Miss Louisa, as he called her, was gone to Bristol, accompanied by Mrs. Mordant, on a visit to Lady Caroline Egerton; at this he started. This visit, said Augustus, is consistent with the tenderness of my Louisa's disposition—she has not flown on the wings of novelty to seek the regions of fashion and dissipation—her gently sympathizing heart is lending its support to her drooping

friend, in the hour of affliction, and the circumstances of a forsaken scene in the midst of winter, cannot deter her from performing the duties of friendship and humanity. Yes, yes, replied I, the girl is well enough in some things, though as to the tenderness of her heart, I have no great reason to praise her for that—but I forgive her, and as I think she has some merit in visiting her friends, when no fashionable Miss would like to be seen at the Hotwells, I fancy it would be a good way of rewarding her to pass upon her with an agreeable surprise, and just let her see that I am returned safe to England, and perhaps she might have no objection to find that your honour was safe too, as you are my particular friend. He smiled at what he styled my oddity, but closed with my proposal—and we set out as soon as he had settled the business that was absolutely

necessary

necessary to be done with Mr. Dobson, and given the proper directions for his future conduct, in regard to his affairs. I hugged myself all the way with the idea of the surprise we should occasion on our arrival, and had, by the assistance of fancy, drawn upon my imagination, about a hundred little sketches of the happy meeting, all varied as the changeful goddess who suggested them. I pleased myself to think that we had avoided the delay of going round to the priory, by the lucky circumstance of Mr. Dobson's being so well informed. Alas! had we known nothing of the matter, we should have escaped a world of trouble, and I should not have been branded for a blunderer as long as I live, for by calling at Mrs. Mordant's we should have received information enough to have dispelled the mystery that had nearly proved so fatal. I have one comfort

however to reflect upon—you cannot laugh at me, Ormond, with any grace, since, had you taken the trouble of informing me in any of your letters, of the discovery made by Miss Lenox, of her family and connections, my marplot adventure had never been celebrated. But we will leave that behind, and proceed to the plain narrative. We arrived at the Hotwells last Thursday, about twelve o'clock, and as soon as we had called up a look, we strolled from the hotel to the library, intending to make enquiries there for the Duke of Northington's house. We there met with a very intelligent, talkative woman, who gave us a profusion of information; from her we learnt, that the Duchess was here, but that the Duke was not; that her grace had a house at Clifton, and that she came every day to the wells; it is about the time now, added she, when her

her grace usually comes, and I vow, says she, there is her beautiful daughter, Lady Caroline Egerton, just got out of the young German Countess's chariot, to be sure what beauties they both are—they would make a fine talk if it was full season. What German Countess do you mean, said I. Oh! the Countess Weltzden, replied she, a pretty creature who is just married to a frightful old man, a German nobleman, old enough to be her grandfather—and they say that she had him only to vex a young gentleman that had slighted her—but poor thing I should think she had the worst of it, for all her fine carriage and grand liveries—but bless me, here they come to my shop as I live, now gentlemen you will see two of the handsomest women in England. At this moment Lady Caroline entered the library, and Louisa, the mysterious Louisa,

holding her arm—and here ended all my fine expectations of a joyful meeting. Augustus just looked at her sufficiently to recognise her well known features, and then without speaking, fell on the ground in the strongest convulsive fit I ever witnessed—never was there, I believe, a scene of equal alarm and confusion to that which followed. The terrified Louisa, when she found it was Augustus, on whose features the agonies of death were so strongly pourtrayed, fainted away in the arms of her friend. The woman whose misinformed tale had created the distress, ran screaming out of the shop, calling her daughter, husband, and maid, to our assistance—declaring in a frightened tone of voice, that she believed all the gentlefolks were dying. Her husband fetched medical aid, and by the application of hartshorn, and other usual remedies,

dies, Louisa was soon restored; but it was long before Augustus shewed any symptom of recovery. At length, opening his eyes, and unclenching his hands, he stared round him, and with a wild look, asked where he was—then seeing Louisa, who flew towards him, the moment she heard him speak, he covered his eyes with his hand, and cried, oh! Paget, in pity save me from that agonizing sight—leave me, leave me, too cruel Louisa—in pity leave me—unless you would be gratified with the sight of my immediate death—he said no more, but letting his head drop upon my shoulder, relapsed into another fit, still more alarming than the preceding one. No description can do justice to the distress of poor Louisa. She wrung her hands in agony, and turning to me, cried, for heaven's sake Sir Henry, explain to me, if you can, the

cause of all this horror—why, why, is the sight of me so fatal to the peace of Augustus? Let me entreat you, Madam, said I, as you value the life of your friend, to retire into another apartment—there is some mistake—I hope at least there is a mistake, but I will wait upon you the instant he is recovered from this alarming fit—let me entreat you to comply. The woman shewed the ladies up stairs, for we had conveyed Augustus into the parlour, but I saw it was with the utmost difficulty that Louisa tore herself away from the object of her affection—while my poor friend laid insensible, I interrogated the woman again respecting Louisa. Oh! yes, she was sure that was the Countess Weltzden—the lady that had not long ago married an old man for the sake of money—fye upon her, added she, for I can see that she has been false, and for-

sworn to this young gentleman—its no matter what becomes of such jilts as she—I wonders how she could have the face to go up to speak to him—that I does—but these handsome folks thinks they may do just what they please. I was too much absorbed in my own feelings, to make any reply. The application of some strong remedies the surgeon had ordered, soon succeeded in restoring Dudly to his senses, but so exhausted that his medical attendant ordered an immediate removal to bed. A chair was procured, and I attended him to the hotel, and when I had seen him safe in bed, I returned to the library, to fulfil my promise to Louisa. In my way thither, I passed a fine chariot that was waiting, and two showy footmen standing by it. I asked one of them, whom the carriage belonged to. The Countess de

Weltzden,

Weltzden, Sir, replied he, she is in that shop, pointing to the library, and Lady Caroline Egerton with her. My fears were now confirmed, and I proceeded to the shop, reprobating the falshood and duplicity of womankind. I had no sooner entered the door, than I was met by Louisa—Oh! Sir Henry, cried she, I feared you had deceived us, or that your friend was too ill to admit of your leaving him. The astonishment I feel at meeting you here, joined to that of seeing Augustus, in so dreadful a situation, cannot be equalled by any thing, but the distress I suffer on the occasion—in pity relieve me from the suspense I endure, by explaining such unaccountable circumstances. I was surprised at the candour painted on her countenance, while she was speaking, and the affectionate manner in which she spoke of Augustus—and felt more exasperated against

against her, than if she had exhibited evident symptoms of confusion, at seeing him whom I imagined she had so deeply injured. Madam, replied I cooly—I must confess I feel a little at a loss myself for an explanation of your conduct, which is mysterious beyond description. Mine, Sir Henry, what can you mean? I mean, Madam, that the news of your marriage, which had reached my unfortunate friend only a few minutes before you entered this house, was the cause of his sudden indisposition, and that I think any surprise on your part at his sufferings on such an occasion, is equally ill-timed, and unfeeling. Gracious heaven! exclaimed she, clasping her hands together, does Augustus suppose me married? And do you, Sir Henry, give credit to so improbable a report? The woman of this house, was my first informer, Madam—the intelligence was

confirmed

confirmed by your own servants, who informed me not ten minutes ago, that they belonged to the Countess de Weltzden. That is true, replied she, that title is mine, and yet I am not married—can it be possible that you are still ignorant of the circumstances which have occasioned that change—I thought you had e're this, been informed of it, through the medium of Lord Ormond—there is a slap in the face for you George. It is impossible to explain it, without entering upon a story too long to be related now, another time I will do it with pleasure—but take my word in the mean time, that my hand can never be bestowed but where my affections were first plighted—And, ah! Sir Henry, hasten to undeceive your friend—let him not be again disgusted with his poor Louisa. I kissed her hand with joy, and assured her, that I could not

conceive

conceive by what means she had attained a distinction, to which she could but honour, so long as it did not clash with the happiness of the noble minded Dudly. Nor would I delay a moment of that happiness, by withholding information so necessary to it—tell him, said she, that I shall only wait his summons to fly to him, to confirm with my own lips, the unalterable faith of my affections. Lady Caroline and I shall now return home, and as soon as I receive a billet from you, the excellent Mrs. Mordant, will accompany me to visit our dear invalid. Charming Louisa, said I, again kissing her hand, for I was quite in extacy, at being relieved from the evils I had dreaded—charming Louisa—how much superior is the sweet candour of your disposition, to the cold affectation of disdainful reserve. I then paid a hasty compliment to Lady Caroline, which the hurry of our

first

first meeting had prevented, and flew back again to Augustus. By the bye Lady Caroline looks more like an angel than ever, and if I had time, I do not know but I might become a candidate for her smiles.

When I returned to Dudly, I found him in so weak a state, that I feared to trust him with the joyful tidings of Louisa's constancy, as the extremes of joy and grief are equally dangerous to weak spirits; I therefore consulted with the physician I had sent for, what had best be done—and he advised me not to withhold the pleasing intelligence, but to be cautious in imparting it. Your friend, said he, seems to be seized with a kind of despair, that will certainly terminate in death, or insanity, unless the cause is quickly removed. You will believe I did not lose much time after this information—

I went

I went to Augustus's bedside, and enquiring how he found himself then, he said, with a forced smile, getting worse Henry, as fast as I can be; the wound in my shoulder so recently healed, gives me such extreme pain, that I fear it is breaking out again—and in that case, I should hope your trouble, which has equalled your generosity from our first acquaintance, will find a speedy end. Vastly tragical, upon my honour, replied I, and so you are going to die all in a hurry, out of pure kindness to me, and for fear of giving me a little more trouble. I will allow, indeed, that you are a troublesome kind of a fellow, but I am nevertheless of opinion, that you will give less by living than dying—suppose when you are dead, we should find out that Louisa is not married, and that she is still constant to her dear humoursome Augustus—what

shall

shall we do then—we cannot call you back again, to set things to rights—so I hope when you are convinced, you will save, instead of give me trouble, by living; and that as you are so anxious about me, you will give up the thoughts of dying, just for the present. For my part, I do not believe Louisa is married—he started as I said this, and the colour flushed his cheeks for a moment, but instantly fading again, the death-like paleness of despair returned, and shaking his head, he said, why Paget, will you persist in raising hopes, that must again be crushed—believe me, I shall suffer less, by dying than living—use then no artifice to prolong a worthless life—every noble sentiment grows faint in my heart, even gratitude and friendship feel the torpid hand of despair—and you will not more effectually lose me, my generous friend, by death, than insensibility.

sensibility. Now Dudly, said I, I am seriously displeased with you—I thought you possessed more fortitude—more energy of mind, than thus to yield yourself the easy victim of despair, and that upon such slight authority as the information of a chattering woman, whom you never saw before—I not only believe that Louisa is not married, but am authorised by herself to contradict the false report. She is your's now, as much as ever, and waits only a summons from me to fly and tell you so. Good heavens! exclaimed he, starting up in his bed, why then am I detained from her, let us not wait to send, but let me fly to her, and on my knees implore her forgiveness, for listening one moment to so wicked a falshood. Stay, stay, said I, I am not to admit of intemperance of any kind—neither in grief or joy—you are not able to fly—your own

credulity

credulity has overcome you—you have given yourself up to despair, and it is not in the power of joy itself, instantly to remove the dire effects of such unpardonable folly. Your wound, you forget your wound. I have no wound now, said he, my heart alone was the wounded part, and that is now well. It was in vain to remonstrate with him, he insisted on his servant being called, and immediately getting up—the flurry of his mind supported him while dressing, but that was no sooner over, than he sunk down in his chair, overcome by the fatiguing effort he had made—he was obliged, though reluctantly, to return to his bed, and have his wound inspected by a surgeon. A considerable degree of inflammation appearing, he was under the painful necessity of submitting to absolute quietness, and at length gave his consent with

tolerable

tolerable grace, to my leaving him to wait upon the ladies, with apologies for the concern his imprudent credulity had occasioned them, and to learn the wonderful tale, the mystery of which had been the primary cause of all the confusion. Committing him therefore to the care of a nurse, and his own faithful servant, I took my leave and went immediately to Clifton, where I found the anxious Louisa, watching the windows for intelligence on the subject next her heart. My chearful countenance dispelled her fears, and she welcomed me with that smile of benignity, that so well becomes her beautiful features. After the first compliments and enquiries were over, she introduced me to the Duchess, and Lady Caroline, and in their presence informed me of the wonderful events that have led to the discovery of her natural parents, and given her a right to the

title

title that was so near costing her so dear. You would have been charmed to have heard her relate the affecting narrative—such perspicuity, blended with conciseness—such a flow of elegant language, yet not one affected or hyberbolical expression—true feeling dictated, what eloquence expressed; and so sweetly did she animadvert upon the proneness to error in the best of characters, that she not only reconciled me to, but made me an admirer of the old Count, whose character I execrated at the beginning of the story. When she had finished the relation, I thanked her for the indulgence she had given me; but alas! said I, a fear obtrudes itself on my imagination, that gives me infinite pain. And what is that? said she. Will the Count de Weltzen, with all the lustre of rank, and splendour of riches, consent to his grand-daughter's union with

a man

a man, who though he has an independent fortune, can boast no rank superior to that of a private gentleman. And why should you doubt it Sir Henry, when his granddaughter's happiness depends upon his consent? Do you think the sorrows of her unfortunate parents have made so slight an impression upon his heart? No, no, the Count de Weltzden is acquainted with every circumstance of my life—he knows the mutual attachment that subsisted between Mr. Dudly and me, and has more than once wept the hopeless sorrow that overshadowed my life, in consequence of his supposed falsehood; he shared my joy when your letter declared him innocent; my anxiety for his recovery while wounded; and do you doubt his approbation, of a reunion of our hearts, which have so long been separated by the untoward accidents of life? I shall

immediately write to him, and request him to come hither, and in his presence will I renew my vows of fidelity to my beloved Augustus. Let not then the shadow of a doubt rest on the mind of your friend, in the hour of adversity; when I thought myself slighted and forsaken by him, I vowed never to be another's; the sun of prosperity now shines upon me; but my heart is unchanged and his only, can I be. My friend, my happy friend, said I, Madam, will thank you for your goodness as he ought to do; he alone is worthy of such angelic sweetness as your's—for my own part, I have only to entreat you, in pity, to call a few mortal foibles about you, when I am to contemplate you; human nature is but frail, and if you go on increasing in perfection, I will not answer for myself: I shall grow selfish, and envious, and like the great

great enemy of mankind in paradise, curse the happiness I cannot partake of. If foibles only are wanting for your security, Sir Henry, your safety is insured, rejoined she, with a smile. We then entered upon general conversation, while I staid. The Duchess was very gracious, but looks shockingly, I do not think she will ever recover. She has been but very lately informed of your marriage, and has not since been able to bear your names to be mentioned to her; the hatred she bears the amiable Lady Ormond, seems as violent as it is ill-founded. When I returned to Augustus, I by degrees, and with great caution related the particulars of the charming Louisa's wonderful history—he was greatly affected at hearing it, and by the generosity shewn by that inestimable woman towards him, notwithstanding all she has suffered for his sake. And this, said he,

is the angel I have injured, by daring to suspect her of infidelity. Oh! Paget, do you believe it possible for me ever to make her the shadow of amends, by devoting every instant of my future life to the study of her happiness. I believe in my heart, replied I, that you will find it difficult enough to deserve her, but you can only try, you know; nobody can insure success; you have one great thing in your favour, she seems determined to think well of you. The first thing you have to perform, is to get well, as fast as you can, to relieve her from the anxiety that oppresses it. I will, I will, said he, and he kept his word, by becoming the most docile creature in the world, and submitting without a mumur, to every prescription of the doctor's. The effects of sudden joy may be dangerous for the first moments, but that their consequences are

different from those of grief, Dudly is an instance in proof; for with all the rout he had made, and his wound really opened again, he was well enough in three days, to pay a visit to the Countess de Weltzden. I accompanied him, but I shall not attempt to describe their meeting, but leave you, who have been a lover yourself, to guess what it must have been—pardon me for saying, have been a lover—no doubt you still are one though married, an age in the calender of fashion. Adieu, I shall write again in a few days, and tell you how I go on. Present me to Lady Ormond, and assure her, I am as much her ladyship's humble servant as your's,

H. P.

LETTER XXIV.

The same to the same.

I SHOULD have rejoiced to hear you was on the road to Bristol, if I was to remain there myself; but we are all on the wing, and shall have taken our flight before your arrival. An express came last night from the Count de Weltzden, desiring his grand-daughter to set out immediately for London; her mother is arrived, and all impatience to see her. Accordingly, this morning by day break, the Countess and her worthy friend, Mrs. Mordant, set out for the great metropolis, leaving the happy Augustus full permission to follow them.

A per-

A permission sanctioned by the Count's letter, who assured Louisa, that her choice should be his, and that he did not doubt of her mother's concurrence with her wishes, though as yet he had not mentioned the circumstance to her. What a lucky fellow Augustus is—it is very strange I cannot be so fortunate—if it was not for a superstitious fear that I shall never succeed, I believe I should try my fortune once more. Lady Caroline Egerton is a character that gains by a nearer acquaintance. I wish I knew whether she hates me very much, because you know that would save me the trouble of asking her, whether she could ever love me; what a vain creature man is; how much does he dread a refusal; a refusal is the devil himself they say; well, and I have had two—so beware of the third. No, I will not try yet, I will stay a little longer, and

yet if any body else should run away with the prize while I am considering, whether I will put up for it or not; a pretty figure I shall cut then. I wish I could have staid till you came, I should have employed you for an advocate I believe. But there is no such thing as persuading Dudly to stay one instant beyond seven o'clock to morrow morning, and as I came with him, what excuse can I make for staying here at this dull season after his departure. However, I will find one for returning when I have settled him in town, if you make any stay. I do not think the Duchess will live long; you cannot imagine the agitation she appears to feel, at the expectation of seeing Lady Ormond. She does her utmost to conceal it, but it is too evident to every beholder. She took the resolution of seeing her quite suddenly, and ever since she made it known

has

has affected to talk with the greatest unconcern about your marriage; but I see she does herself great violence, if I do not mistake, the effort will cost her dear. I dare say you will arrive a few hours after our departure, how provoking that is. This letter will meet you at Oxford. Adieu,

Ever your's,

H. P.

LETTER XXV.

The same to the same.

WELL, now for Epithalamiums, Bride-cake, and favours, and congratulations, from all the uncles and aunts, and cousins, in the four quarters of the globe. They are married, absolutely, and *bona fida* married, I was witness to it myself, and no less a person than the Archbishop of Canterbury performed the ceremony. Louisa was taken a little by surprise I believe, but when she found it must be, she submitted with that grace so inseparable from every action of her life—and I dare say I have taken you by surprise too, for I am sure you did not expect we should have been quite so expeditious,

tious, but I will tell you how it was. When the young Countess and her friend arrived in Portman-square, they found the Dowager Countess de Weltzden waiting to receive them. You may guess with what extacy she folded such a daughter to her bosom—how she wept at the recollection of her past sorrows—how she smiled at the idea of the joys that are in store for her; and in short displayed all those eccentricities to which violent grief, or its opposite, violent joy, always expose their votaries. A thousand times she kissed her lovely daughter, a thousand times she thanked Mrs. Mordant for her maternal care of her; in short, Mrs. Mordant says, it was the most affecting scene she ever witnessed. When calmness was restored to all parties, the good Count mentioned Augustus; described his long attachment to Louisa; their mutual sufferings for

these several months past. To this picture Mrs. Mordant added an account of their meeting at Bristol, and the agonies poor Dudly had suffered by the mistake. The Countess was affected, and taking Louisa's hand, my child, said she, will meet with no obstacle to her happiness from me; from every thing I have heard of her I have the greatest reason to rely upon her prudence; and if the friends who have known and loved her so long, approve of her choice, I shall be most happy to confirm it by my consent. After such a preclude, you may be sure our reception was every thing we could wish. We stopt at my house in St. James's-square, just long enough to adornize a little, and then repaired to Portman-square, the Count met us with open arms, and immediately introduced us to the Countess, who is almost as enchanting a woman as her

daughter.

daughter. Louisa was summoned to the drawing-room, and entered blushing like the first dawn of a fine day in June. I shall not tire you with all the says I's, and says she's, indeed it would be difficult, for we were all so overjoyed, that it frequently happened, we all talked at the same time. The conversation was carried on in French, as the Countess speaks English with difficulty. She expressed herself highly pleased to find her daughter such a proficient in German. What a kind attention it was of General Lenox's to have Louisa taught her native language. If ever, said he, my child should find her natural friends, she will be able to converse with them in their own tongue. This little trait of the General's goodness, Louisa related with tears of gratitude, to the happy circle in Portman-square, among numberless instances of kindness and benevolence

volence in her lamented benefactor. We parted at a late hour, and the next morning was appointed for the dispatch of business. You will easily believe that we kept our appointment. Dudly gave the Count a *carte blanche* for settlement—money can be no object between such hearts as your's, said the good Count, taking a hand of each—but it is fitting, nevertheless, that such matters should be settled with precision; I am now going to put your affection to a severe test, continued he, looking gravely. I am under the absolute necessity of going to Vienna, in the course of a few days—the time of my absence is uncertain—it is the nearest and dearest wish of my heart to be present at your nuptials—will you, to indulge an old man's whim, consent to wave all formal preparations, and be immediately united? I will so adjust matters with the

gentlemen

gentlemen of the long robe, that every thing shall be going on during my absence, and at my return all money matters shall be finally adjusted—in the mean time, I have settled three thousand per annum on my Louisa, independent of whoever she may marry, which will secure her a suitable jointure in case of your death before every thing is concluded—what say you my children—will you indulge me? Louisa put her arms round her grand-father's neck, and hiding her blushing face in his bosom, said, in a low tremulous voice, my dear father dispose of me as you please—while Dudly, in an extacy of joy, called him his benefactor, his friend—the author of his felicity. The Countess and Mrs. Mordant then took the hands of the happy pair, and joined them—next Thursday is fixed for their nuptials. So between sweet confusion, manly joy,

and

and parental delight, we made a blessed morning's work of it. Then post haste the mantua-makers, milliners, and taylors were set to work, and many a pretty little sempstresses bright eyes were dimmed with midnight toil, to array the beautiful form of the lovely Louisa.

I shall not describe the wedding—you have been married yourself, so you may fancy it just like your own if you please. As soon as the ceremony was over, the bride and bridegroom set off for my house, an please you, near Epsom; which I lent them because they neither of them liked to go to Lenox Abbey immediately. When they were gone, we exchanged congratulations—eat a bit of bride cake, drank to the health of the *nouvelle marites* and departed. I forgot to tell you though, who

were

were present, first then, the Count and Countess, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Mrs. Mordant, the pretty madcap Miss Egerton, and your humble servant—and if I had not had Lady Caroline in my head, I believe I should have made love to her cousin; I never was in such a perfect good humour in my life—I saw two people that I loved so dearly, made perfectly happy—can there be a joy comparable to that? all selfish enjoyments fade before it, and become nothing. Do not forget to say a word now and then in my favour, to the charming Caroline—but mind you keep close to truth; no exaggerations—for fear I should not be able to perform what you promise for me. Good heavens! your letter is just given me—the poor Duchess is then no more! She did not live to see the injured Emily—unhappy woman! I hope heaven has for-

given

given her—poor lovely Lady Caroline! My heart bleeds for her—but you and her sweet sister will console her under this heavy trial. That the Duchess was not a perfect character will aggravate her amiable daughter's affliction. Sweet Lady Ormond! your description of her behaviour on this melancholy occasion, is just what I should expect of her, benevolent, gentle, and forgiving as she is. Oh! Ormond, you have indeed a treasure. The lively beginning of this letter will not suit the house of mourning, but I have not time to begin a fresh one. This will follow you to Northington Castle. Remember me respectfully to Lady Ormond, and Lady Caroline, and believe me with an unalterable affection,

Your's

H. P.

FINIS.

J. BARFIELD, PRINTER, WARDOUR-STREET, SOHO.

RARE BOOK

COLLECTION

THE UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA
LIBRARY
PR3991
.A1
N68
V.3